Week ending May 16 1959

JOHN BULL

EVERY WEDNESDAY 5d

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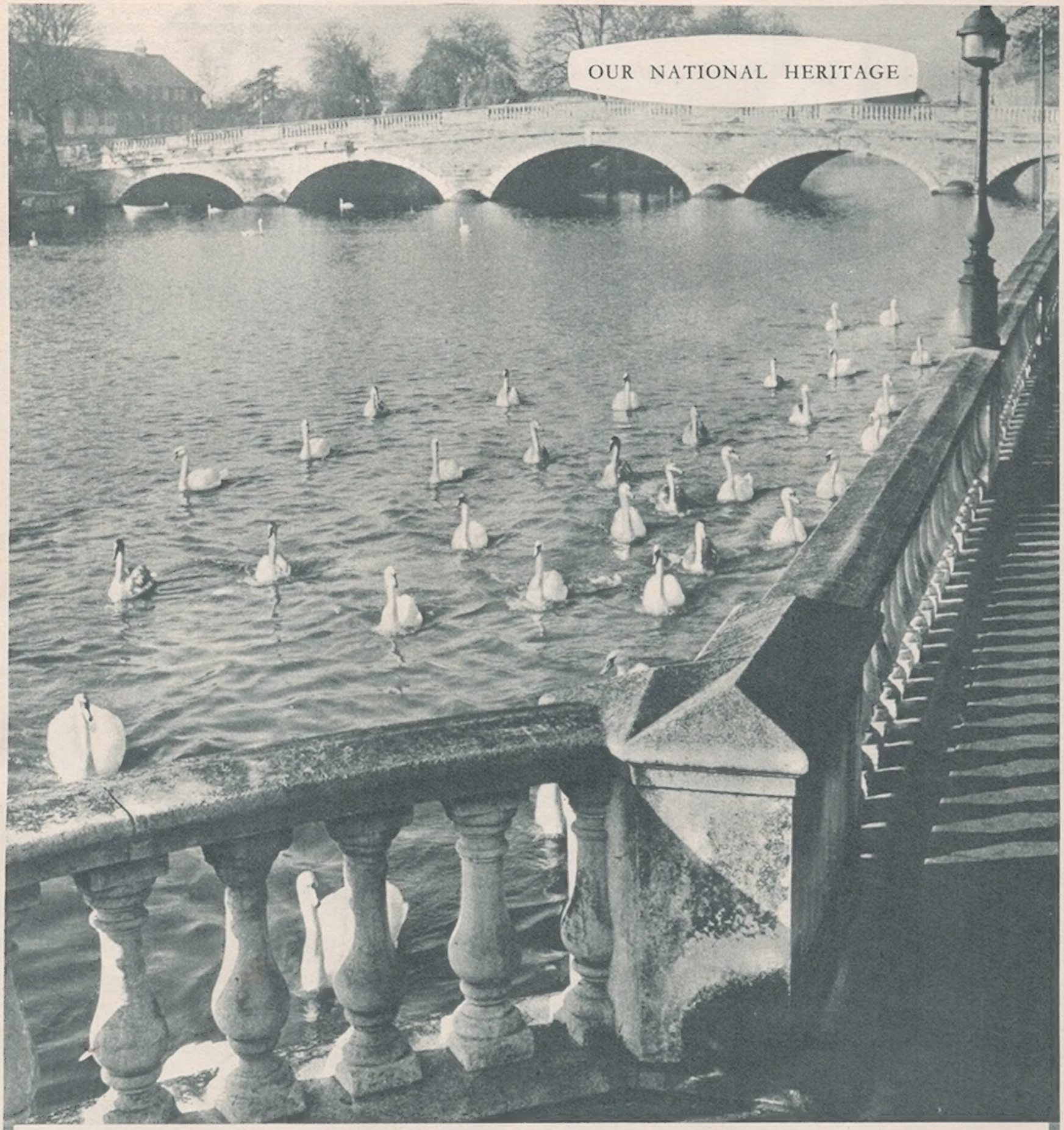
Are you missing the chance of good health?

UNEASY HEADS: The king backed by the Reds

The wayward life of Richard Tauber—by his wife

INCORPORATING Everybody's Weekly



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John Bunyan was imprisoned for 12 years in the County Gaol. But he wrote *Pilgrim's Progress* in the old Town Gaol, that stood on Bedford Bridge until it was demolished in 1765.

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JOHN BULL
and
EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY
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Contents

ARTICLES

MY BATTLE WITH THE ANTS
by Sylvia Higgs 9
THE ROAD
by Arthur W. Jacobs 14
GILBERT HARDING 19
ARE WE MISSING THE CHANCE OF GOOD HEALTH?
by Dr. Brian Anson 23

STORIES

LEAVE IT TO ALGY
by P. G. Wodehouse 6
FOUR MINUTES TO TWELVE
by Robert Holmes 10

SERIALS

MY HEART AND I (Part 2)
by Diana Napier Tauber 12
THE UNEASY HEADS (Part 3)
by Geoffrey Bocca 17
EARTHSHAKER (Part 7)
by Robert Krepps 20

MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME

by Roger Smithells
SPRING TURNABOUT 26
LIGHTWEIGHT FURNITURE .. 28
WORTH NOTING 38

FEATURES

SWAN: 8. THE WITNESS STATES: 18. IN SHORT: 22. EVERYBODY'S PUZZLING: 24. JOKES: 25, 29, 31, 34, 35, 37. DACHSIE: 30. DECEIT: 25, 30, 32, 35. BE A BETTER DRIVER: 32. THUMBTHING: 37. WE ADVISE: 38.

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The Cover

EMERGENCY stations! Here's a pair of buccaneers who are right up the creek. There they were, all eyes on the distant horizon, when who should come at them off the port beam but this mischievous cargo of sirens, golden-voiced though clearly bent on piracy? It was enough to take the wind out of anyone's sails. Artist Seabright, who was shipwrecked once himself, can sympathize. "There'll be some red faces back at the club tonight. . . . Salty stories about the two poor fish who couldn't get away"

Free Speech

JOHN BULL and EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech." Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to our Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post and in our feature "We Advise."

Life's Regret

TWENTY years ago I was anxious to leave school and emigrate to Canada. My imagination was fired with tales of the fortunes to be made during the Canadian harvests.

Unable to convince me himself, my father sent me to see our bank manager, who spent a whole evening pointing out to me the success he had made of his life—the security, the fine house—all obtained from what he admitted was a fairly boring job.

I saw in a local paper sent from home that he recently died—aged seventy-four. Apart from a short spell in a branch office he worked all his life in one town.

I wish I could say I had ignored his advice and gone off to make my fortune. Instead I went into an office and curbed my wild ideas to achieve that man's idea of success.

Till the day I die I shall bitterly regret that I went to see him.—JOHN MACDOUGALL, Swiss Cottage, London, N.W.3.

Friendly Types

Bedridden with flu I watched two blackbirds building a nest in an evergreen bush a yard from a path and a main road.

Now the nest has four eggs. But I am puzzled by the birds' choice of a site so near busy streets, houses and railways. Fifty yards away there are quiet hedges and fields.

Do birds like the company of human beings?—LLEW T. JONES, Swansea.

"Birds don't seek out company," says an official of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, "but in building nests they are confined to their own territories, which in the case of blackbirds may be about an acre.

"And, of course, 'suburban' birds get used to a steady stream of traffic and people, and don't worry about it unduly."

Suspicious Coppers

The frequency with which cars and lorries run away when left unattended on fairly steep hills causes concern to many people—yet one obvious solution is frowned upon by the police, I am told.

That is to turn the wheels of vehicles into the kerb when parking on a hill. I mentioned this to a motorist, who said: "If I did that a policeman would be waiting for me when I returned. He would want to know what was wrong with my brakes and have them tested on the spot.

"The mere sight of my front wheels turned into the kerb would automatically suggest to the constable that my car had some mechanical defect."

Do our policemen give motorists no credit for a bit of common sense in these matters, or are they trained to be ultra suspicious?—J. C. KENDALL, Crook Lane, Winsford, Cheshire.

A police spokesman says: "With its wheels turned inwards a car would protrude slightly. If a constable took action he would only be doing his duty."

The Ministry of Transport says: "We have no guidance to give on a safe way to park on hills.

"The Highway Code says that there should be no parking near the brow of a hill or hump-backed bridge.

"It would be a matter of common sense to turn the wheels in—or put something behind one of the wheels.'

Tough Nuts?

When hard hats are considered essential to safe riding, why do we

so frequently see the Queen and Princess Margaret on their mounts with only head scarves to protect them in the event of an accident?

Even the best horsemen can have a fall sometimes. — ELIZABETH KAYE, Freeland Road, Ealing, London, W.5.

Cover Lines

From the note on your amusing cover (JOHN BULL, April 18) we learn that canes now cost elevenpence. Yet the English ratepayer is getting a bargain compared to his Scottish counterpart.

When I left my native land some years ago the teachers' tawse (leather strap) had increased in price to 7s. 6d. and by now, no doubt, has risen further. In education, at least, Scots cannot be called mean.—J. STUART MUNRO, Wallasey, Cheshire.

. . . The boys who go to the school portrayed by artist Chittock should think themselves lucky. Not many schools provide chairs for pupils outside the headmaster's room.—A. J. WILKS, Edmund Close, Bradway, Sheffield.

Those Revs. . . .

The sight of the Rev. Vivian Symons working on his church in your article on the clergy (JOHN BULL, April 18) was a real inspiration.

Often the clergy are not so ready to take off their coats. There are times when a lead in getting things done manually would help others to keep within the Church.—L. PHILLIPS, Shettleston, Glasgow, E.2.

. . . It was a great pleasure to hear again of that jovial character the Rev. Geoffrey Beaumont.

Hayling Island is doubtless a glorious peacetime holiday centre, but nowhere could have been bleaker to our Royal Marine unit in the winter of 1940, until the Rev., as he was affectionately known, arrived to brighten up the island.

In those days he would lead the fun on the local pub piano. He brought home to us youngsters the message of religion and respect for himself far more than any staid bishop could have done.—F. MALLINSON, Tingley, near Wakefield, Yorks.

Missing Item

How many newly-weds have been taken in by the fact that a bedroom suite does not include a bed?

When we returned from our honeymoon we expected to find our new home delightfully furnished. It was—but without a bed.

By what stroke of logic do furniture stores manage to delete the most important item of all from bedroom suites?—J. H., Harrow, Middx.

"The classic bedroom suite is comprised of two wardrobes and a dressing table, and perhaps a headboard," says the Furnishing Centre.

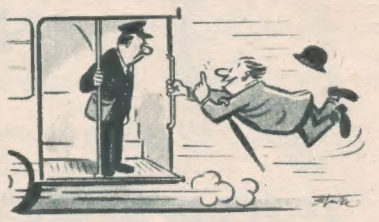
"These cabinet pieces are made by one factory, while the bed itself has to be made by another factory.

"When they are made separately like this, it is more convenient to market them separately."

Sweeten 'Em Up!

The reader who longs to try the American tactic of "busting the nose" of twopenny dictators ("Free Speech," April 18) should use a subtler approach.

He should take the offender aside and with an air of naïve innocence earnestly inquire if he can be of



assistance with the other's trouble.

When Sourpuss shows bewilderment switch on the full treatment:

"You can't fool me, old man. I can read it in your every move—such nervousness, such irritability, such downright bad temper—you're up to your neck in trouble . . . don't deny it."

Then you suggest that you have a quiet word with the little woman, the mother-in-law, the boss—whoever is at the root of the trouble. I guarantee the grouser will soon be greeting you with a cheerful smile.

Just a word of warning—never mention financial troubles. Your offer of help might be taken up.—D. C. H., Lichfield, Staffs.

Queue Up—Shut Up

It was left to me, a lone male, fifth in the queue at the fish shop, to challenge a woman who hurried in, went straight to the salesman and got served in front of us all.

I said: "Excuse me, madam, but there is a queue here."

"Sorry," she said. "But I'm in a hurry."

The woman at the front of the queue said: "What a fuss some people make!" Number two in the queue agreed. The third and fourth women asked me whether I was too blind or impatient to see that the woman had been in a hurry. The salesman gave me a black look.

I still can't see where I went wrong. I, too, was in a hurry.—G. SLOCOMBE, Woodland Rise, Muswell Hill, London.

Spot The Car

With road accidents rising, why do manufacturers of car bodies turn out cars of a colour which merges into the landscape?

Certain shades of brown and one shade of green, I've found, just

There's an

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Free Speech

continued from page 3

aren't visible in the country in spring and autumn, particularly in sunshine.—MRS. A. V. STOCKER, Norton Lane, Earlswood, Solihull.

"We've discussed this problem many times," says the Road Research Laboratory. "However, unless a car could change its colour like a chameleon, there seems to be no practical solution. What is good for one background may make visibility worse in another.

"'An interesting part of the same problem concerns spotting cars in dusk and darkness. Many of us here are convinced that cars should have to drive on headlights, as in parts of the U.S.

"These would have to be properly dipped, of course, but in general there is too much driving on sidelights in this country."

Brainless Beauties

I cannot understand why in your article on models (JOHN BULL, April 18) it should be thought surprising that sometimes they earn less than typists. These latter girls have had to work for years to attain a good standard of education and efficiency in their work.

Surely these qualities are not required in modelling?—E. M. HARLOW, Mayport Road, Luton.

Quiet, Please

Why should we have to talk on train journeys (Free Speech, April 25) to any Tom, Dick or Harry who wishes to inflict himself on us? I must defend those who would rather read a book, do a crossword puzzle, or snatch a cat-nap after a tiring day. Let's live and let live.—MAURICE H. PRIOR, Tilehurst, Reading.

Flat Out?

The reader who was given "fantastically high" estimates for a flat-roofed house must have gone to architects with a prejudice against new forms of construction ("Free Speech," April 18).

As a roofing specialist I can assure him that a properly designed flat roof is cheaper than the traditional pitched roof—and for this reason is used on 90 per cent of new factories and schools.—M. G. PLOWS, Charville Gardens, Leeds, 17.

"The cost is certainly lower for large buildings," says a building expert. "But the cost is proportionately much higher for a house."

Sweet And Fruity

Why does the tomato trade ignore the yellow variety of tomato (JOHN BULL, April 18)? They are sweeter and more fruity than red ones. Is it because housewives are too conservative?—J. M. NAIRN, Scotland.

"Yellow tomatoes are not popular in the south of England," says the Tomato Board. "They're grown mostly in Scotland. They are slightly thinner-skinned than the red variety—and don't travel so well."

We regret that owing to a typographical error in our article, the Tomato Board members' salaries were given as £23,000 a year. In fact, their total remuneration has never exceeded £3,000 in any year.

NEXT WEEK

A dazzling array of new complete stories by Britain's top authors

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Raising fivers was nothing to Baby Algernon. He could beat his father at it - with no questions from the police

IT was summer, and that popular resort, Bramley-on-Sea, was full of ozone breathers. Mr. Purkiss, proprietor of the widely read journal for children, *Wee Tots*, was there with Mrs. Purkiss. Oofy Prosser, the Drones Club millionaire, was there, looking perfectly foul in a panama hat with a scarlet ribbon. A distinguished visitor from the United States—Wally Judd, the cartoonist, the man behind the Dauntless Desmond comic strip which is syndicated in so many American papers—was week-ending there. And on the beach in front of the Hotel Magnifique was Bingo Little, the able young editor of *Wee Tots*, and his wife Mrs. Bingo, better known as the novelist Rosie M. Banks. They were watching their infant son, Algernon Aubrey, build a sand castle.

The day was bright, beautiful and balmy, but it too often happens in this disturbed post-war world that, when all Nature smiles, there are a whole lot of unfortunate toads beneath the harrow who cannot raise as much as a simper. Bingo was one of these. Melancholy had marked him for its own.

It was not the fact that Mrs. Bingo was off to London to attend the annual dinner of the Pen and Ink Club that had so lowered his spirits, sorely though he missed her when she went away: what had blotted the sunshine from his life was a remark that had just fallen from her lips.

Mrs. Bingo had been speaking of the mysterious disappearance of Bingo's gold cuff-links on the previous day. She was convinced, she said, that a professional cuff-link thief had been at work. Bingo was to place the matter immediately in the hands of the police.

"They will go round," she explained, "and make inquiries at all the pawn shops."

AT this remark, Bingo began to feel, warm though the day was, that centipedes with icy feet were walking up and down his spine. The last thing he wanted was to have the police making inquiries at these establishments, particularly at the one in Seaview Road. For it was there that, in order to obtain £5 with which to back a horse that had come in seventh, he had personally put those cuff-links up the spout. And Mrs. Bingo's views on that sort of thing were rigid.

"Well, I must be going or I shall miss that train," said Mrs. Bingo, shortly after exploding this bombshell. "Take care of Algy. Don't let him out of your sight for a minute. I'll be back tomorrow night. Good-bye, my precious."

"Goodbye, tree on which the fruit of my life hangs," said Bingo, and a moment later was alone with his thoughts.

From these he was jerked by a voice beside him saying "Ugh!" and, looking up, he saw Mr. Purkiss. The proprietor of *Wee Tots* was staring at Algernon Aubrey with horror in his every feature.

"I beg your pardon?" said Bingo. He spoke coldly. He had no illusions about his first-born's appearance, being well aware that though Time, the great healer, would eventually turn Algernon Aubrey into a suave boulevardier like his father, he presented to the eye at the moment, like so many infants of tender years, the aspect of a mass murderer suffering from an ingrowing toenail. Nevertheless, he resented this exhibition of naked horror. Purkiss, himself far from being an oil painting, was, he felt, in no position to criticize.

Purkiss hastened to explain. "I am sorry," he said. "I should not have let my feelings get the better of me. It is just that, situated as I am, the mere sight of the younger generation chills me to the marrow. Mr. Little, there is to be a Bonny Babies contest here tomorrow, and Mrs. Purkiss insists that I judge it. She thinks it will stimulate the circulation of *Wee Tots*."

BINGO'S hauteur vanished immediately. "Golly!" he said. "You aren't looking forward to that, I'll bet."

"To be relieved of my obligations, I would give untold gold."

"When you say untold gold, would you go as high as a fiver?"

"Certainly, and consider the money well spent."

"Then hand it over," said Bingo, "and in return I will take your place on the judge's rostrum. You were speaking about a fiver, Purkiss. I should be glad to see the colour of your money."

As in a dream Purkiss produced a £5 note. As in a dream Bingo took it. As in a dream Purkiss tottered off. And as in a dream Bingo was feasting his eyes on the crackling slip of paper when a nippy little breeze, springing up unexpectedly, blew it out of his hand. The last he saw of it, it was making good time over the sparkling water in the general direction of France.

It was some ten minutes later that Bingo, who had spent most of those ten minutes with his head buried in his hands, picked Algernon Aubrey up and started walking dully homeward.

He was passing the door of the Hotel Magnifique, when Oofy Prosser came out.

The poet Wordsworth has told us that his heart was accustomed to leap up when he beheld a rainbow in the sky, and this was how Bingo's heart behaved when he beheld Oofy Prosser. Like Purkiss, Oofy was not a thing of beauty, but he had that quality which so many disgustingly rich men have of looking disgustingly rich. It was with hope dawning in his soul that Bingo bounded forward.

"Oofy, old man!"

Observing what it was that Bingo was carrying, Oofy backed hastily.

"Hey!" he exclaimed. "Don't point that thing at me."

"I think he wants to kiss you."

"Stand back!" cried Oofy, brandishing his panama hat. "I am armed."

Feeling that the conversation was straying from the right lines, Bingo hastened to change the subject.

"Oofy, old man, I'm looking for someone who will lend me a fiver."

"Very hard to find, that type of man. Why do you want a fiver?"

In accents broken with emotion, Bingo told Oofy his story. When he had finished, Oofy remained for some moments plunged in thought.

"You say you're judging this Bonny Babies thing?" he said at length.

"Yes, I'll have to go through with it after taking Purkiss's fiver."

OOFY nodded: "Then it's obvious. You want to divert your wife's mind from gold cuff-links and pawn shops—to give her, in other words, something else to think about. Very well. Enter that little gargoyle of yours and award it the first prize and she will be so delighted that cuff-links will fade out of her mind. I guarantee this. I am not a mother myself, but I understand a mother's heart from soup to nuts. In her pride at the young plug-ugly's triumph, everything else will be forgotten."

Bingo stared. It seemed to him that Oofy's brain must have blown a fuse.

"But, Oofy, reflect," he said. "Those mothers are tough stuff. If I give my own baby the prize, I shall probably get lynched."

Oofy clicked his tongue impatiently.

"Naturally I had not overlooked an obvious point like that," he said. "The child will not be entered as whatever-his-ghastly-name-is Little, but as whatever-its-ghastly-name-is Prosser. I will bring him to the trysting-place, affecting to be his uncle. You will

Leave it

Another hilarious romp by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

LOST
REGULATIONS (SR)
"This man says he knows you," said the police sergeant, inviting Bingo to inspect the still struggling exhibit. Oofy's good eye glared fury

to Algy

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN PHILLIPS

Leave it to Algy

continued from page 6

then, after careful consideration, raise his hand with the words 'The winnah!' All perfectly straightforward and simple."

"But not frightfully honest, what?"

"Well, what does it matter? The prize will only be a woolly muffler or something. It isn't as if money were involved."

"Something in that."

"There is everything in that. If money entered into it, I would never dream of suggesting such a ruse," said Oofy virtuously. "How about it?"

"All right. After all, who cares who wins a woolly muffler?"

"Exactly. Excuse me a moment," said Oofy. "I have to make a telephone call."

He went into the hotel, rang up his bookmaker in London, and the following conversation ensued:

"Mr. McAlpin? This is Mr. Prosser."

"Good afternoon, Mr. Prosser."

"Listen, Mr. McAlpin. I'm down at Bramley-on-Sea, and they are having a Bonny Babies contest tomorrow. I'm entering my little nephew, and I thought it would add to the interest if I had a small bet on."

"Certainly. We cover all sporting events."

"What odds will you give against the Prosser colt?"

"Does he look like you?"

"There is quite a resemblance."

"Then you can have fifty to one."

"Right. In tenners."

Oofy returned to Bingo.

"The only thing I'm afraid of," he said, "is that, when it comes to the acid test, you may lose your nerve."

"Oh, I won't."

"You might, if there were no added inducement. So I'll tell you what I'll do. The moment you have given your decision I will slip you a fiver and you will be able to take the cuff-links out of pawn, thus avoiding all unpleasantness."

Bingo could not speak. His heart was too full for words.

NEVERTHELESS, as he made his way to the arena on the following afternoon, Bingo was conscious of distinct qualms and flutterings. And his apprehensions were not relieved by the sight of the assembled competitors, fully a dozen of whom were so comparatively human that it would obviously cause comment when he passed them over in favour of young Algernon Aubrey.

However, with the vast issues at stake there was nothing to be done but stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood and have at it. So, proceeding to the platform, he bowed gracefully and embarked on his speech.

He spoke of England's future, which, he pointed out, must rest on these babies and others like them. He spoke of *Wee Tots*, putting in a powerful build-up for the dear old sheet and urging one and all to take advantage of the easy subscription terms.

He spoke . . . and here Bingo's manner took on a new earnestness . . . of the good, clean spirit of fair play which has made England what it is—the spirit which, he was confident, would lead all the mothers present to accept the judge's decision, even should it go against their own nominees, with that quiet British sportsmanship which other nations envy so much.

Then, striking a lighter note, he said that he was reminded of a little story of two Irishmen which might be new to some of those present.

The story went well, but, though Bingo acknowledged the guffaws with a bright smile, inwardly his soul had begun to shrink. Time was passing, and there were no signs of Oofy.

He resumed his speech. He told another story about two Scotsmen. But now his comedy had lost its magic and failed to grip. A peevish voice said: "Get on with it," and the sentiment plainly pleased the gathering. Soon possibly a hundred peevish voices were saying "Get on with it," and shortly perhaps a hundred and fifty.

And still no Oofy.

Five minutes later, the popular clamour for a showdown having taken on a resemblance to the howling of timber wolves in a Canadian forest, Bingo was compelled to act. With ashen face he awarded the handsome woolly muffler to a child selected at random from the sea of faces beneath him and sank into a chair, a broken man. And as he sat there, trying not to let his mind dwell on the shape of things to come, a finger tapped him on the shoulder and he saw standing beside him a policeman.

"Mr. Little?" said the policeman.

Bingo, still dazed, said, yes, he thought so.

"I shall have to ask you to come along with me," said the policeman.

Bingo knew that on these occasions it was always best to go quietly. He rose and accompanied the officer to the door. Then, with a curiosity perhaps natural in the circumstances, he asked why he was being pinched.

"Not pinched, sir," said the policeman. "You're wanted at the station to identify an accused . . . if you *can* identify him. His statement is that he's a friend of yours and was acting with your cognisance and approval."

"I don't follow you, officer," said Bingo, who did not follow the officer. "Acting how?"

"Taking your baby for an airing, sir. He claims that you instructed him to do so.

"It transpired this way. Accused was observed by a Mrs. Purkiss with your baby on his person slinking along the public thoroughfare. Her suspicions aroused, she summoned a constable and gave accused in charge as a kidnapper, and after a certain amount of fuss and unpleasantness he was conducted to the station and deposited in a cell. Prosser, he said his name was. Is the name familiar to you, sir?"

The officer's statement that there had been a certain amount of fuss and unpleasantness involved in the process of getting the accused Prosser to the police station was borne out by the latter's appearance when he was led into Bingo's presence. Oofy had a black eye and his collar had been torn from the parent stud. The other eye gleamed with fury and what was patently a loathing for the human species.

"This man says he knows you," said the sergeant at the desk, inviting Bingo to inspect the exhibit.

"That's right."

"He says he's a friend of yours."

"He is."

"And you gave him your baby."

"Well, you could put it that way. More on loan, of course."

"Ho!" said the sergeant. "That's a bit different. . . ."

"So sucks to you, Sergeant," said Oofy. "And now, I presume, I am at liberty to go."

"Well, you presume wrong," said the sergeant, brightening at the thought that he was at least going to save something from the wreck of his hopes and dreams. "Not by a jugful you aren't at liberty to go. There's this matter of obstructing the police in the execution of their duty. You punched Constable Wilks in the abdomen."

"And I'd do it again."

"Not for a fortnight or fourteen days you won't," said the sergeant. "The bench is going to take a serious view of that, a very serious view. All right, Constable, remove the prisoner."

"Just a second," said Bingo, though feeling that this was not quite the moment. "Could I have that fiver, Oofy?"

His suspicions were proved correct. It was not the moment. Oofy gave Bingo a long, lingering look.

Bingo had started to totter off when the sergeant reminded him that there was something he was forgetting.

"Your baby, sir."

"Oh, ah, yes," said Bingo.

As he sat with Algernon Aubrey on the beach some quarter of an hour after parting from the sergeant, Bingo viewed the future with concern. Already he could hear the sharp intake of the wifely breath and the spate of wifely words which must inevitably follow the stammering confession of his guilt.

Emerging with a shudder from this unpleasant reverie, he found that Algernon Aubrey had strayed from his side and, looking to the south-east, observed him some little distance away along the beach. The child was hitting a man in a Homburg hat over the head with his spade, using, it seemed to Bingo, a good deal of wristy follow-through.

He rose, and hurried across to where the party of the second part sat rubbing his occipital bone.

"I say," he said, "I'm most frightfully sorry about my baby socking you like that. Wouldn't have had it happen for the world. But I'm afraid he never can resist a Homburg hat. They seem to draw him like a magnet."

The man, who was long and thin and horn-rimmed-spectacled, did not reply for a moment. He was staring at Algernon Aubrey like one who sees visions.

"Is this your baby?"

Bingo said, yes, sir, that was his baby.

The man muttered something about this being his lucky day.

"What a find!" he said. "Talk about manna from heaven! I'd like to draw him, if I may. We must put the thing on a business basis, of course. I take it that you are empowered to act as his agent. Shall we say five pounds?"

"But I haven't any money. I can't pay you."

"You don't pay me. I pay you," said the man. "So if five pounds is all right with you. . . ." He broke off, directed another searching look at Algernon Aubrey and seemed to change his mind. "No, not five," he went on. "It would be a steal. Let's make it ten."

BINGO quivered like an aspen. For an instant the thought crossed his mind that this must be his guardian angel, buckling down to work after a prolonged period of negligence. Then he saw that the other had no wings. He had spoken, moreover, with an American intonation, and the guardian angel of a member of the Drones Club would have had an Oxford accent.

"Ten pounds?" he gasped. "Did I understand you to say that you would give me a tenner?"

"Cash down. Here you are."

Bingo took the banknotes reverently. "When would you like to start painting Algy's portrait?"

The man's spectacles flashed fire. "Good God!" he cried, revolted. "You don't think I'm a portrait painter, do you? I'm Wally Judd."

"Wally who?"

"Judd. The Dauntless Desmond man. You must know my comic strip. It's been running for years in the *Gazette*."

"I don't read the *Gazette*."

"Well, it's there, and in sixteen hundred papers in America. Dauntless Desmond, the crooks' despair."

"He is a detective, this D. Desmond?"

"A private eye or shamus, always up against the creatures of the underworld. He's as brave as a lion."

"Sounds like a nice chap."

"But there's a snag. Desmond is impulsive. He will go bumping off these creatures of the underworld. He shoots them in the stomach. Well, I don't need to tell you what that sort of thing leads to."

"The supply of underworld creatures is beginning to give out?"

"Exactly. There is a constant need for fresh faces, and the moment I saw your baby I knew I had found one. Those hard eyes which could be grafted on the head of a man-eating shark, and no questions asked—he's a natural! Could you bring him round to the Hotel Splendide right away, so that I can get busy on some preliminary sketches?"

Bingo drew in a deep breath. It set the banknotes in his pocket crackling musically, and for a moment he stood there listening as to the strains of some great anthem.

"Make it half an hour from now if you would," he said. "I have to look in first on a fellow I know in Seaview Road."

THE END

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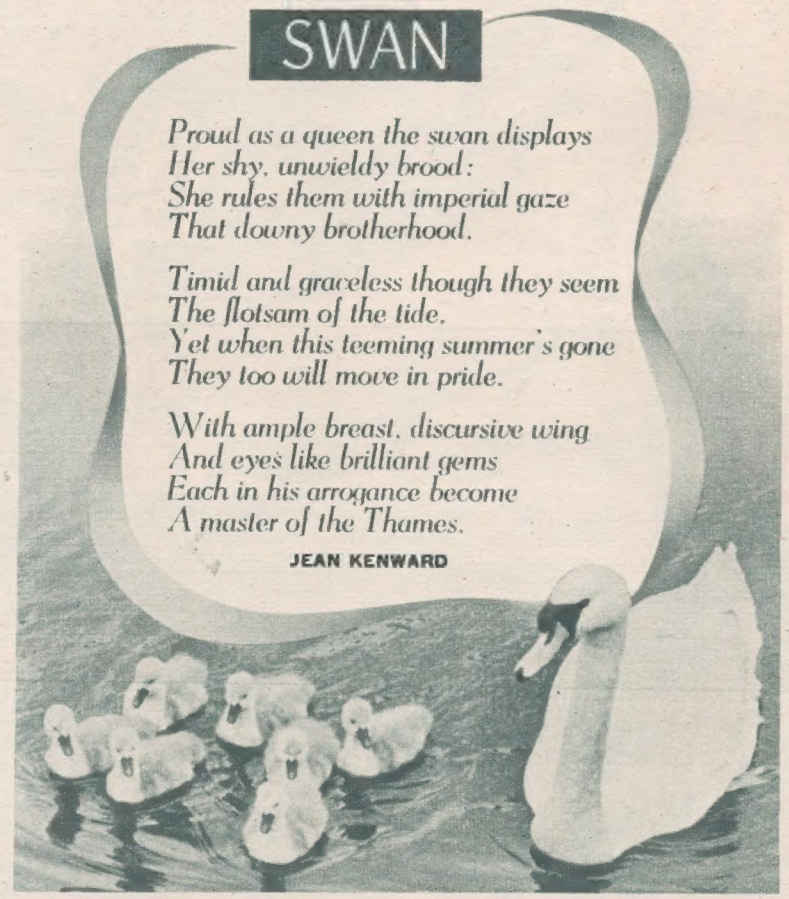
SWAN

Proud as a queen the swan displays
Her shy, unwieldy brood:
She rules them with imperial gaze
That downy brotherhood.

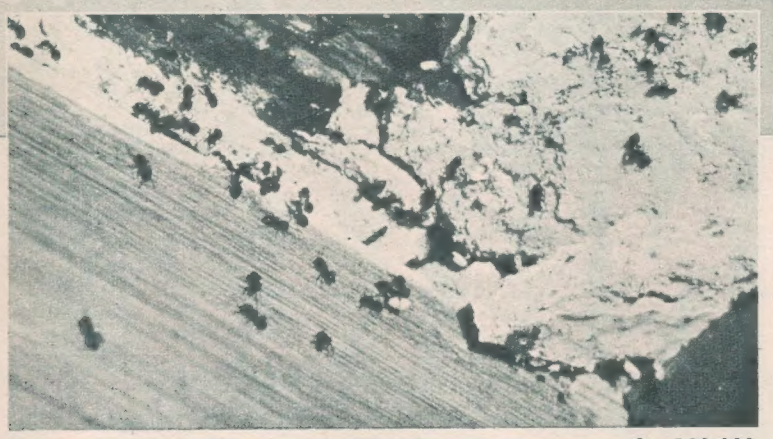
Timid and graceless though they seem
The flotsam of the tide,
Yet when this teeming summer's gone
They too will move in pride.

With ample breast, discursive wing
And eyes like brilliant gems
Each in his arrogance become
A master of the Thames.

JEAN KENWARD



My battle with the ants



For years Sylvia Higgs watched her home being overrun by 100,000 ants. When at last the nest (inset) was found it was five feet high

They were everywhere, raiding the larder, invading the beds. So I hit back—and ripped the house apart

by SYLVIA HIGGS

THE ants that wrecked our house in Esher first came to live with us about six years ago. They came, we presume, from our large and beautiful garden, and at first we did not really mind.

Most people have a soft spot for ants; they are clean, industrious and remarkably intelligent. But our ants in Esher were rather special ones.

Before we had finished with them they had ruined our house, reduced me to a nervous wreck, cost us thousands of pounds and turned our home into a rare case history quoted by entomologists all over the world.

Over the years we discovered posses of them all over the house. I remember standing by the telephone talking to a friend one day, trying to count the ants marching up the wall in front of me.

Sometimes, when all was quiet at night and my husband and I sat in our sun lounge, one of us would say: "Look!" And there, by the skirting board, up the door lintels and along the corner of the ceiling, was the night shift going to work—thousands of ants marching up and down, up and down and disappearing into corners. For all we knew they might have been the same ants going round in circles.

Naturally we tried to do something about them. As time went on, I got to know every insecticide in the shops. Not one of them worked. I called in a pest control firm. Its experts retired defeated.

Then, in May, 1957, came the day of decision. It was my housekeeper's day off. She had often complained of battalions of ants in the kitchen.

That night, as I stood over the sink doing the washing-up, I saw them. The draining-board was black with them. They rushed hither and thither all over the cork floor. They came out of incredibly tiny holes between the white tiles on the walls. Later, in my bedroom, I took my nightdress off the bed and casually shook it. A few ants dropped to the floor.

I turned to my husband and said: "George, I'm sorry, but either we get rid of the ants or we sell the house."

Little did I know that our house had become the headquarters of one of the most unusual families of ants ever to be found in Britain.

I called in a builder. He suggested ripping the place apart, but added: "Before we do that, why don't you call in the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research? They've got experts for everything."

So one day in early June, two of the D.S.I.R.'s boffins, Alec Green and Joyce Kane, arrived at the house. I took them into every room. Sure enough, there were our ants.

I could see that they were most interested, and they took a few ants away with them in specimen jars.

When they returned the next day, Alec Green told me: "Mrs. Higgs, your house has a unique distinction. These ants of yours are not *Lasius niger*, the

continued on page 24

The end of the trail. Scientist Alec Green finds the colony and kills thousands of ants with a spray. This photograph and the inset above are Crown copyright

It was the code of the underworld. Now McCandless

FOUR MINUTES TO

must accept an appointment with death — for his daughter or himself

TWELVE

by ROBERT HOLMES

ILLUSTRATED BY K. J. PETTS

At eleven thirty Michael McCandless left the factory to collect his firm's payroll from the bank. Pallet, the assistant cashier, accompanied him. It was a fine, bright morning with the sun high and strong and a light breeze coming fresh off the Quantocks.

The two men did not hurry. They walked quietly, swinging their empty bank bags, and stopped once to look in a florist's window.

"I've never tried verbena," Pallet said. "Perhaps next year. . . ."

They crossed the road and went into the park where McCandless habitually left his car. Because it was market day the park was fairly full. A cattle truck had drawn in on one side of his car and there was a green sports car on the other. As McCandless went towards the driver's door he lost sight of Pallet. And bending, keys in hand, he heard nothing.

The leather-wrapped, pear-shaped piece of lead made only a very slight noise as it smashed into Pallet's brittle, elderly skull. McCandless looked up to see Goldie Spode a yard away. He straightened slowly. Strangely, he was not afraid. But then he had always known how the end would be. He had built his life in the shadow of this moment. Only recently—only in the last two or three years—had he dared to hope it might never come.

"Well, Mac?" Spode's voice was soft, the words almost an exhalation of relief. "It's been a long time."

"I've been expecting you," McCandless said.

Spode moved closer, right hand in his jacket pocket. McCandless tensed, waiting for the hand to lift, for the flick-knife to rip into him. He knew how fast Spode was with the knife. Spode said: "That was a silly thing to do, boy, getting your monicker in the papers."

Without being aware that he had moved, McCandless found that he was pressing back against his car, unable to retreat farther. He felt his legs trembling. He closed his eyes. "All right," he said. "Do it now."

"I should do you favours," Spode said. "Get in the car, Mac."

Clumsily, still trying to watch Spode, McCandless scrambled in behind the wheel.

"Unlock the other doors," Spode said. He picked up McCandless's bag and threw it into the back. He walked round to the nearside and said in a louder voice: "What's keeping you, Jack?"

Jack Price, McCandless thought. *So they had both come.* Remembering Pallet for the first time, he turned in his seat and saw Price coming from behind the cattle truck with the other bank bag. Price looked worried. He said: "That old twist—he doesn't look so good!"

Spode touched the knuckles of his hands together. It was a nervous habit McCandless remembered well. "Ah, dry up," he said. "He'll live. Is he out of the way?"

"In the truck, Goldie, like you said."

Spode nodded. "Okay, then. Give me that bag. You know what comes next."

McCandless watched Price walk round and get into the sports car. After one glance the big man had not looked at him. Yellow gravel spurted from under the sports car's rear wheels as Price drove it away.

Spode slid into the seat beside McCandless. "Start up, Mac," he said. He took a cigarette from a gold case and lit it with a gold and platinum lighter.

McCandless turned the ignition key. "Where are we going?" he said. It was an effort to keep his voice even.

Spode said: "Just drive. We're going to have a little talk, Mac. Then we'll go to the bank."

McCandless got the car into motion. His hands were slippery on the wheel. As they turned out through the exit Spode said: "Keep in the town and don't do anything stupid."

"Listen," McCandless said. He swallowed hard. "I'm not taking you to the bank, Goldie. Do what you like."

"Shut up! Shut up, you stinking, lousy little squealer," Spode said. Colour flooded his sallow cheeks and faded again. After a moment he said: "I've been planning this for three weeks. You better do what I say."

McCandless said nothing. His mind was dull with fear.

"It's a month since you pulled them kids out of the sea," Spode said. "You should have let 'em drown, eh?"

McCandless said: "I tried to keep it quiet." He remembered trying to explain to Ellen, his wife, what would happen if Spode or Price saw the newspapers. But Ellen did not believe in Goldie Spode and his flick-knife. She thought he was exaggerating when he told her how the underworld treated its squealers.

"You had luck, Mac," Spode said. "We came down here to fix you. Boy, I was going to give you a real fancy-looking boat race, believe me."

There was a point-duty policeman ahead signalling them on. McCandless wondered if he could attract the man's attention.

"Then," Spode said, "when I heard you'd married the boss's daughter I thought we might mix business with pleasure, see?"

They were ten yards from the policeman. McCandless let his hand drop carelessly to the headlight switch. There was a click and he felt a sharp stab in his left side.

"Right under the heart," Spode said.

McCandless took his hand off the switch. The policeman—fat and bucolic—grinned at him as he drove by.

Spode threw his cigarette end out of the window. "For a minute, Mac, I thought you were going to be stupid." He leaned back in his seat. "The old geezer in the lorry—that your pa-in-law?"

"No." McCandless thought of Pallet lying helplessly, perhaps badly injured, on the soiled floor of the cattle truck.

"Pity about him," Spode said. A gold tooth showed when he smiled. "He must have been one of these eggheads I read about."

"Pallet was—he kept pictures of his grandchildren on his desk," McCandless said. The memory brought with it a sudden rush of anger. He turned towards Spode. "You filthy——"

There was a flash of bright steel and Spode's knife was resting lightly against McCandless's neck: "Eyes on the road," Spode said. "I'm a nervous passenger."

"If he dies they'll top you," McCandless said. "It'll be capital murder."

Spode said: "I'm in Paris, and I've got a passport and friends to prove it." He glanced at his watch. "We'll go to the bank now, Mac."

"No," McCandless said. "I'm not helping you, Goldie. I don't care if you kill me. I'm not helping you."

"You'll help me," Spode said. He looked again, deliberately, at his watch. "And I'll tell you why—school comes out in fifteen minutes."

"School?" McCandless's face twisted with fear.

"Yes. The school your kid goes to, Mac, in Queen's Parade. Jack's up there waiting."

"Christine," McCandless said. His voice was hoarse.

Spode said softly: "She walks home for lunch. Not far—but you know what a lousy driver old Jack is?"

"She's—she's only seven, Goldie!"

"My lucky number," Spode said, touching his grey, carefully waved hair.

McCandless brought the car round in a U-turn. He was thinking of Christine walking home along the wide suburban pavement. He could see the whole thing so clearly. The quiet, sunlit road, the almond trees at precise

continued on page 36

The bank clerk took the bags from McCandless slowly. "I see you've a new man with you today," he said

MY HEART and I . 2

I marry Richard - and then run away

by DIANA NAPIER TAUBER

Hollywood life was gay . . . exciting. But Richard's message to a former lover spoiled it all. Inflamed by jealousy I left for New York—and waited in despair

RICHARD TAUBER and I found ourselves in Salzburg, Austria, again. The weather for a change was dry, and sunshine painted the surrounding country with generous colours. The hotels were filling up, for Salzburg's season was approaching with its music, gaiety and Tyrolean evenings.

Franz Lehar and his wife, Sophia, welcomed us to their villa with open arms, and immediately invited us to dinner with Oscar and Clara Straus.

It was still rather a strange experience for me to have such exalted friends. I had known Richard for only ten months. In that time he helped my acting career and rescued me from debt by giving me a part in one of his films. Also he swept me off my feet by announcing our engagement—without a word of consultation with me beforehand—and taking me off with him on tours of Europe.

But my anger at the blithe way he assumed I would marry him was now, in February, 1936, mellowing into genuine love. I was learning a lot about this impetuous, tubby man with a monocle who was one of the world's most famous tenors. I was learning about his extravagant style of living, the truth in the rumours of his philandering and, more recently, as a result of his often being mistaken for a Jew, the bitter feeling against him that existed in Nazi Germany.

During our evening at the villa of the Lehars, Franz said to Richard: "I feel that you could in fact return to Germany and be welcome. After all, you're a Catholic, not a Jew, and you're Austrian, not German."

We bade everyone an affectionate farewell, but, as we drove back to our hotel, I noticed that Richard seemed preoccupied. "What are you thinking about so deeply?" I asked.

"Germany," he said.

The next morning he played his piano for hours, but did not seem to want to talk.

"Richard, if you want to visit Germany, why not go to Munich, tomorrow?" I said thoughtlessly. "It's only one hundred kilometres and I'll drive you there for lunch."

He looked reflective. "I would really love to step on German soil once more. I love Munich; it's very much like Austria—and the people have similar temperaments." He jumped to his feet. "Yes, a wonderful idea."

We got up early for our great adventure and arrived at the frontier controls on a clear, bright morning, passing into the German Reich without the slightest difficulty. I drove along the great autobahn, our Auburn covering the kilometres in no time at all. We slid into Munich in time for lunch at the famous Vier Jahreszeiten Hotel, which was, although I did not know it at the time, a favourite meeting place for high-ranking Nazi officials.

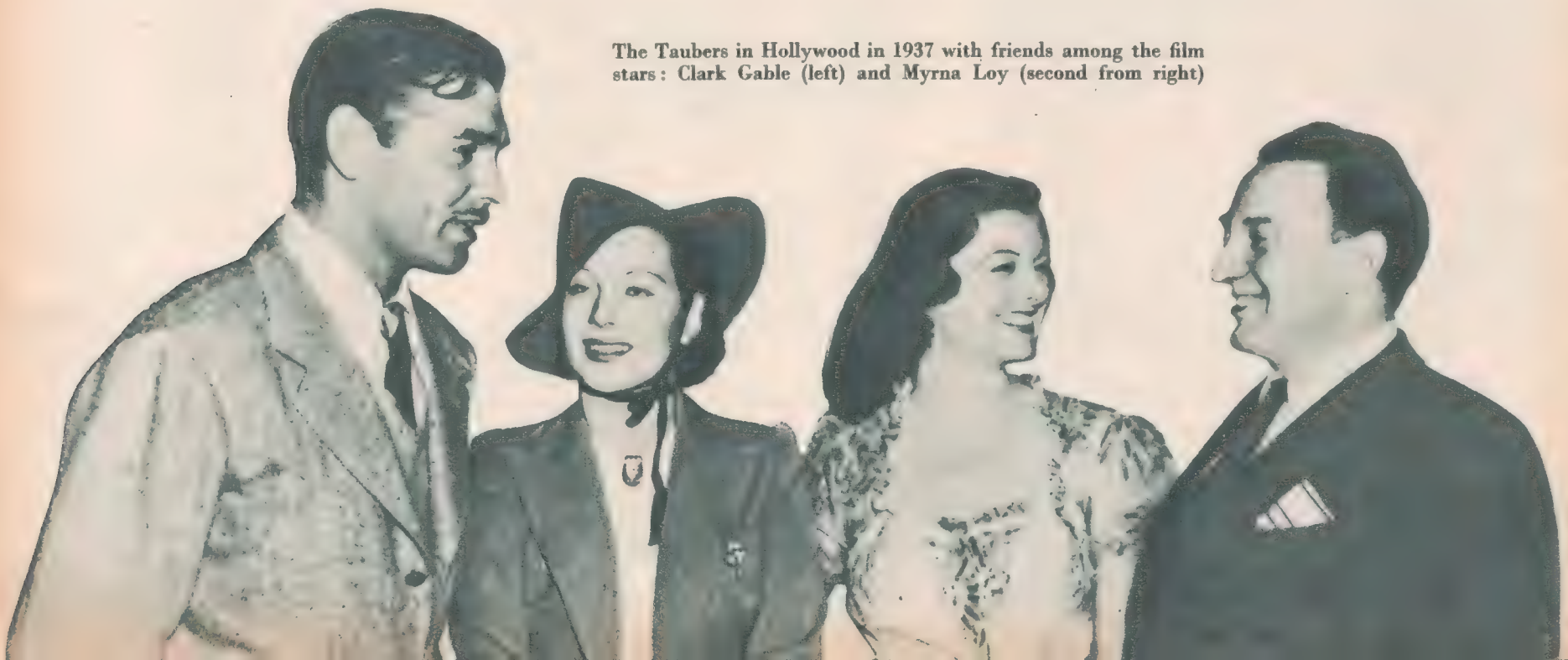
At a nice corner table we ordered a meal, and as we were waiting for our food, I noticed many people gazing at Richard with amazement.

Their expressions were not exactly friendly, and I felt a little shiver of apprehension.

The waiter arrived with the first course and slammed it on the table. I looked at Richard to see if he had noticed—but he gave no sign. His face, however, was slightly flushed and his hands were trembling as he picked up his knife and fork.

Soon the atmosphere became really unpleasant: at the table next to ours

The Taubers in Hollywood in 1937 with friends among the film stars: Clark Gable (left) and Myrna Loy (second from right)



The Taubers' wedding breakfast was in the Hyde Park Hotel. Their cake was a replica of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Mary Losseff was just "a deep friend," said Tauber. But at first Diana refused to believe him

a woman was talking loudly: "These Jews eating here. I think it's absolutely disgraceful!" She was looking hard at Richard as she spoke and I felt frightened and so angry that I left the table, making my way quickly to the ladies' cloakroom outside the restaurant. I was intercepted by a tall man who clicked his heels at me.

"*Frau* Tauber?" he said, in excellent English.

"Not yet," I replied. "I am his fiancée. Why?"

"Well, *Fraulein*," he interrupted me quickly. "I suggest you take Tauber back to Austria as soon as possible."

"But I don't understand. What . . .?"

"He is in great danger here," interrupted the man, and without another word turned on his heel and went to his table.

I hurried back to Richard and whispered: "We must leave at once."

He looked up, startled, his fork poised in the air.

"Get up, *please*," I said urgently. "Pay the bill and *hurry*!"

Richard followed me out of the restaurant. I was so nervous that I had the greatest difficulty in turning the car round for the drive back to Austria.

"What has happened?" he demanded.

I explained quickly. "We must leave Germany at once."

I drove very fast. Richard sat by my side in silence, but I felt his nervous tension as he gazed ahead. As we reached the frontier, I had our passports ready and, as mine was British, placed it on top of Richard's Austrian one. Fortunately, the guard only took a casual look at them, opened the barrier and let us through. Just as we neared the Austrian control post I heard shouts behind us, commanding us to halt. I pressed my foot hard on the accelerator and sped across the few yards which separated the two countries.

"Safely over, thank God!" I breathed in relief.

I turned to look at Richard and saw that his face was white, but expressionless.

I pulled up at a café in Reichenhall, a small village near Salzburg. Neither of us said a word until the waiter had brought us steaming cups of coffee.

"Diana," said Richard quietly, "I think that Germany is no longer Germany. . . . We will never discuss it again. . . . I have had a very big shock."

We returned to Vienna for a few weeks in order that Richard might complete his contracts at the State Opera.

Then we arrived back at Elstree to start work on the film, *Land Without Music*, a fairy-tale story set in a small country in central Europe.

Marriage plans

In the meantime, plans for our marriage were going steadily ahead. Richard's divorce from his first wife had been granted and he was free at last.

We fixed the date of the wedding for June 20, 1936.

We originally hoped to be married in Franz Lehar's chapel in Vienna, but this dream had dissolved into thin air. After Richard's divorce action, a register office marriage was all that we could manage.

Richard's great wish was to have his own operetta, *The Singing Dream*, produced in London. He discussed this ambition with Francis Queensberry and Richard Hart-Davis, both members of the Stock Exchange. Francis was enthusiastic and wanted the show to be presented by Charles Cochran. "If he likes it, we'll find the money," Francis promised Richard.

Cochran seemed a little dubious at first, but was quite willing to consider the proposition. "I'd like to see the book," he said. "Please send it to me and we can decide whether or not it's right for the British public."

Richard waited impatiently for the verdict, but it was several weeks later when Walter Forde, the director of *Land Without Music*, was shooting our final scenes that we heard from "Cocky."

"What's the matter?" I asked Richard. "You look miserable."

"I am very miserable," he replied. "Cocky says he dare not risk putting on my operetta at the moment; he wants to produce *Paganini* instead."

By now the picture was finished, and there were plenty of engagements ahead to keep Richard occupied before we started on our next film, *Pagliacci*.

"A concert here, a concert there!" said his accompanist, Percy Kahn, jubilantly. "Tauber is everywhere!"

He gave a gala concert at the Paris Opera House for a big charity which was an overwhelming success. When we returned from Paris, we met Evelyn Laye and Cochran at the Savoy to discuss the proposed production of *Paganini*. "It will be a sensation, I am sure," said Cochran. "I have a theatre booked for 1937."

The night of the première of *Land Without Music* arrived. Josef von Sternberg, the man who, I think, first realized that Marlene Dietrich would be an international star, sat just behind us. He leaned over and said to me: "Well, young lady, you look beautiful. Are you as beautiful on the screen, too?"

"Much better," I laughed. " I have the assistance of false eyelashes and a wig. But I must warn you that I'm not very good in the part."

"My dear girl," he sympathized, "it's very difficult when your rival is a voice like Richard's. But I don't suppose you mind any more," he added shrewdly.

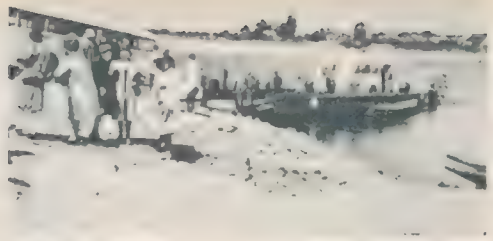
He was right, I thought; suddenly I realized that I *didn't* mind—I simply wanted to make a success of being Mrs. Richard Tauber. A few months before, when I was a struggling actress, I would have swooned if von Sternberg had so much as glanced in my direction.

All sorts of exciting things happened during the next few weeks. Apart from the discussions on the making of the next film, talks had now started

continued on page 29

Above: Richard Tauber with Gigli (left) and Chaliapin. Below: at the piano with Evelyn Laye and C. B. Cochran during a rehearsal of *Paganini* in the spring of 1937

HELMSTEDT



JUNE 15, 1948

MAY 7, 1949

MAY 12, 1949

HELMSTEDT
Russian soldiers often held up traffic here—and ordered a return to Berlin

THE ROAD

WEST BERLIN'S main road link with Western Europe is a 110-mile concrete autobahn, built by Hitler to facilitate his war plans. Since the war it has been a reliable guide to the state of Soviet-Western Powers relations.

It is the road that carries most of West Berlin's supplies from the West: an umbilical cord to freedom—and just as easily cut. For, all the way from Helmstedt—the last Western outpost on the way to Berlin—the road runs through East German territory.

The autobahn is skirted partly by dark pine forests near the western end, but mostly it runs through the flat wheat and barley fields of the central German plain.

It is a motorway, built for speed. There are few signs of life along it. In early postwar days there were a few small roadside camps—British and American traffic aid posts for vehicles in difficulty. But not a town or village slows its purpose; hardly a house. A lonely road.

The right of the Western Powers to be in Berlin stems from an agreement between Britain, the United States and Russia in September, 1944, when, in anticipation of German defeat, the future zones of occupation were agreed, together with Four-Power control of Berlin, which was to be similarly divided.

The fact that the German capital lay in the Russian Zone, which would have to be crossed to reach it, was not foreseen as a difficulty. Western troops had been well into this area when Germany surrendered, but withdrew to their own prearranged zones, as agreed. Right of access to their sectors of Berlin was inherent in the Western Powers' right to be there at all—a right which was unquestionable.

It was agreed at the Potsdam Conference on August 2, 1945, that Germany would be treated as a whole, the four occupying Powers following a common policy in trade, currency and banking. The industrial products of the Western Zones were to be exchanged for the agricultural and special machinery of the Russian Zone. The autobahn was to be a free international highway.

But the Russians began to develop their zone without reference to the rest of Germany. They used its products for reparations and instead of the East and West Zones supporting each other the Western Powers had to import food and materials to their zones. The expense of maintaining even the barest living standards led the United States and Britain to join forces and administer their zones as one. East-West relations deteriorated: the importance of the autobahn increased.

MARCH 30, 1948. The Soviet Military Governor announced strict Russian control of all rail and road traffic between Berlin and the Western Zones as from April 1—the next day.

Britain, while willing to discuss traffic control, replied that it could not happen at twenty-four hours' notice—or without agreement. But the Russians still built a new autobahn checkpost in their zone, one mile west of the United States control point on the outskirts of Berlin.

APRIL 1, 1948. A platoon of Russian soldiers armed with revolvers and tommy-guns moved eastwards over their zone border into the British sector of Berlin and set up a control post on crossroads near Gatow, the British airport. They detained British vehicles and drivers, but later released them.

The British sent nine armoured cars and two hundred men of the 11th Hussars to surround the Russians. The situation was tense. Berlin held its breath. Finally the Russians withdrew.

APRIL 2, 1948. Traffic returned to normal. The city breathed easy again.

APRIL 5, 1948. A Russian Yak fighter collided with a B.E.A. airliner while the British plane was circling to land near Berlin. Fifteen people died, including the Russian pilot. Tension grew again as the British commander-in-chief announced fighter escorts for civil aircraft in future. The order was cancelled when Russia pledged no more interference with air traffic.

APRIL 11, 1948 Russians demanded the closing of American and British traffic aid posts and said they would look after traffic through their zone.

JUNE 11, 1948. German drivers, westbound from Berlin, were allowed through the Russian checkpost outside the capital, but were turned back a hundred miles west at the other end of the autobahn—fifty yards short of the British Zone.

JUNE 15, 1948. Russians closed the allied army-built bridge carrying the autobahn over the Elbe near Magdeburg. It needed repairs, they said. It was in poor condition, but they turned down the West's offer to strengthen it. Traffic trickled over by ferry.

JUNE 18, 1948. The East Zone was closed to all German road traffic. This was Russian reaction to the Western Zone's decision to introduce new currency as part of the "work-together" plan. The Russians said they were afraid of a flood of invalid currency entering their zone.

JUNE 24, 1948. The Russians stopped all rail traffic—the last link between Berlin and the West. The blockade was on. British troops and armoured cars turned out to prevent Germans obeying Russians orders to remove scrap metal from a yard just inside the British sector of Berlin. Troops dug in round the yard, machine-gun posts were manned, and they stood to all night. The Russians made no further move.

But the situation in the city was becoming critical. There was talk of only four weeks' rationed supplies of food and fuel. Four-Power rule of Berlin had "to all intents and purposes ceased to exist" said Marshal Sokolovsky, Russian Military Governor.

JUNE 26, 1948. The airlift began.

For 327 days the autobahn remained closed to the West. During that time British and United States aircraft made 195,530 flights, carrying 1,414,005 tons of supplies. Fifty-seven airmen died. The cost: to U.S.A., £37,500,000; to Britain, £6,500,000.

AUGUST 7, 1948. Russians threatened

JULY 8, 1949
Russians start a go-slow at checkpoints. Queues of lorries stretch miles

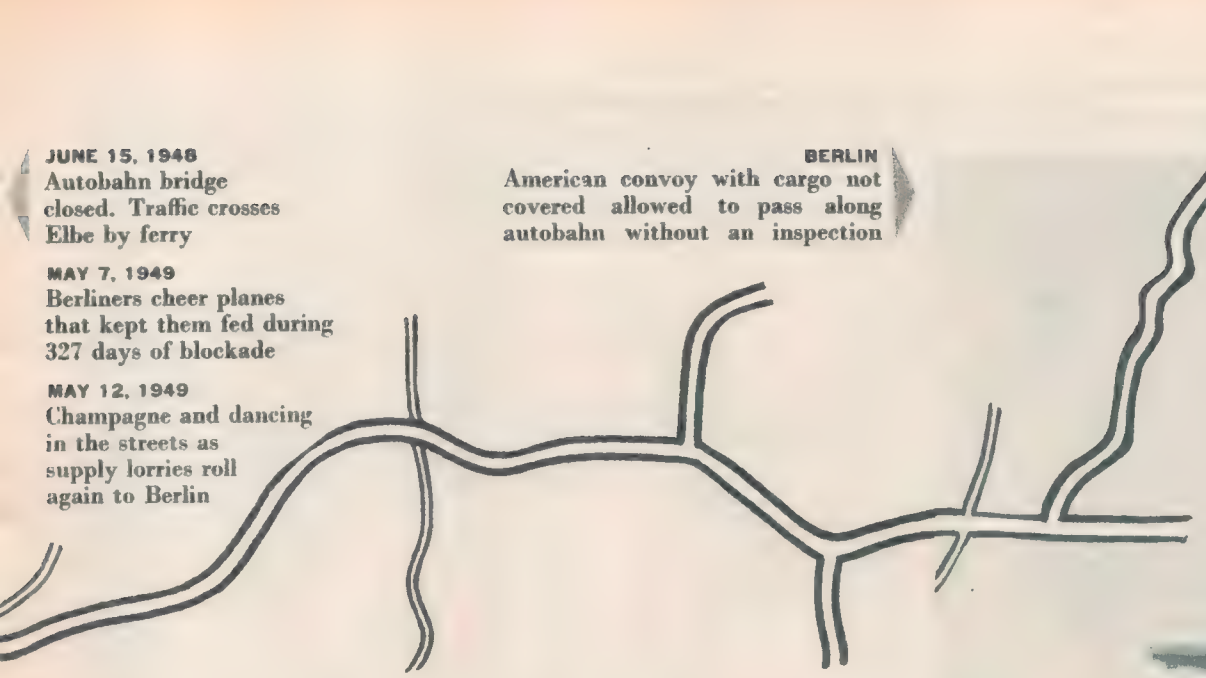
JULY 8, 1949

JANUARY 21, 1950
East-West currency talks coincide with a new Russian "slow down"

FEBRUARY 2, 1959
Russians halt convoy and want to search it. To prevent them, crews sit fifty-four hours in cabs

FEBRUARY 2, 1959

JANUARY 21, 1950


BERLIN
JUNE 15, 1948
Autobahn bridge closed. Traffic crosses Elbe by ferry
BERLIN
American convoy with cargo not covered allowed to pass along autobahn without an inspection
MAY 7, 1949
Berliners cheer planes that kept them fed during 327 days of blockade
MAY 12, 1949
Champagne and dancing in the streets as supply lorries roll again to Berlin

As East meets West Arthur W. Jacobs profiles the Berlin autobahn—the cold war's most dangerous highway

to force down aircraft which, they alleged, were flying dangerously low over their airfields.

OCTOBER 1, 1948. Two Yak fighters buzzed a British freight plane, swerving aside barely fifty yards from the freighter's nose.

OCTOBER 2, 1948. Hundreds of Russian air force planes crossed the British and American air corridors in mock combat, firing blank ammunition.

OCTOBER 15, 1948. Russian guns opened fire in the air corridor. From the Gatow control tower shells could be seen bursting three miles west. Planes continued to fly over the bursting shells and the airlift was not interrupted.

MAY 12, 1949. The blockade ended following Four-Power talks in New York. At Helmstedt fifty cars raced down the autobahn at midnight to be first into West Berlin.

JULY 8, 1949. The Russians started a "go slow" at their checkposts. They also refused to accept night traffic. The flow of supply trucks every twenty-four hours dwindled from 450 to sixty-eight. Four lorries an hour passed through the check.

This delay coincided with East-West talks on currency.

JULY 14, 1949. Without explanation the Russians suddenly stopped being so careful with their checking and the lorries passed through at the usual rate. The currency talks had broken down.

JANUARY 21, 1950. Without warning the rate of lorry checking at the Russian posts dropped again from one every three minutes to four an hour. West German police had temporarily seized the Russian-controlled H.Q. of the Berlin railway system, which happened to be in the American Zone.

JANUARY 27, 1950. A five-mile queue of 240 lorries waited at the Russian checkpost.

FEBRUARY 2, 1950. The U.S. warned that the airlift might start again.

FEBRUARY 8, 1950. Once again the Russians began passing lorries at the normal rate.

FEBRUARY 19, 1950. Twenty-two lorries bringing tinplate, copper and white lead from Western Germany were seized within twenty-four hours.

FEBRUARY 21, 1950. Russians released the lorries without explanation.

MAY 30, 1950. The most serious incident for many months. An Allied patrol of British, U.S. and French vehicles was ordered off the autobahn, which had been temporarily closed by East German police to allow Communist youth free movement to Berlin for a Whitsun rally. The patrol was directing traffic along an eighteen-mile diversion. A Russian colonel approached alone and ordered it off the road within an hour. Fifty-five minutes later he returned with an armed escort.

The Russian and the American patrol commander faced each other by the roadside. The Russian ordered the patrol to retire to the Russian checkpost at Berlin or be arrested. The only alternative was armed resistance. The patrol withdrew.

SEPTEMBER 1, 1951. After a year of capricious, unexplained delays—called off as suddenly as they occurred—a heavy toll was imposed without warning on all West German road traffic. A lorry and two trailers had to pay £12 10s. to use the autobahn.

SEPTEMBER 20, 1951. After Allied protests an inter-zonal trade agreement, worth £84 million to the Russians, was signed on the understanding that the Soviet would end its economic pressure on the Western Zones and traffic delays.

OCTOBER 18, 1951. Traffic delays began again. Goods were held up long enough to alarm the West, but released in time to stave off protest.

JANUARY 30, 1952. Queues at the Russian checkposts again. Lorries were detained for "irregularities" in papers—sometimes merely one letter in the spelling of a word: fines up to £85.

MAY 9, 1952. The Russians switched their attention to Allied military patrols which, except for the Whitsun incident, had never been interfered with. Patrols were turned back at the Berlin end of the autobahn: "Not in possession of proper documents." It was pointed out that patrols had been assisting traffic since 1945. Russians did not reply.

MAY 13, 1952. Russians closed the autobahn at both ends. A political-military agreement between Federal Germany and the West was in sight.

MAY 14, 1952. Russians played "cat and mouse" with patrols, sometimes leaving them, sometimes halting them.

SEPTEMBER 15, 1952. Six hundred West German hauliers threatened to strike unless given a government subsidy. The autobahn run was no longer profitable because average waiting time at the checkposts was sixty hours. A lorry took five and a half days for the trip—an average of one mile an hour.

SEPTEMBER 16, 1952. The strike was called off on promise of a cut in the cost of lorry fuel.

SEPTEMBER 18, 1952. Senior Russian officers arrived at the 280-strong lorry queue at Helmstedt. They made a few phone calls and drove off. Suddenly the Russian sentries stopped their meticulous checking.

APRIL 1, 1955. The East German Government increased road tolls up to eleven times the previous charges. The cost—£8,500 a day—was met by West German subsidy.

MAY 21, 1955. Four-Power talks on these crippling charges broke down.

JUNE 10, 1955. The East Germans reduced the charges slightly and a period of quiet on the autobahn coincided with talks at Geneva.

SEPTEMBER 21, 1955. East Germany signed peace treaty with Russia. German Communist leader Walter Ulbricht threatened to reduce traffic "should you step up the cold war."

OCTOBER 4, 1955. Britain, France and the United States warned Russia that they held her responsible for guaranteeing free access to Berlin, since they did not recognize East Germany.

OCTOBER 18, 1955. Russia replied that she would continue to be responsible for military traffic, but that the new German State was responsible "for the territory under its sovereignty."

DECEMBER 5, 1956. The weekly American military convoy was held by Russian sentries outside Berlin. They demanded to search the trucks for "concealed people." The Americans refused to allow a search. The U.S. Provost Marshal and the senior Russian officer on duty were called. The American asked if the truth of the United States documents was doubted. Replied the Russian, poker-faced: "Believe, but check from time to time."

The American demanded that the convoy be allowed through in ten minutes or they could take the consequences. The Russians laughed at this ultimatum. The Americans returned, seething, to Berlin.

DECEMBER 8, 1956. The road was reopened. "A misunderstanding" said the Russians.

NOVEMBER 14, 1958. The autobahn under the world spotlight again when Russians held-up three United States lorries bound for Western Germany from Berlin. The Americans had again refused to allow their vehicles to be searched. Russian tommy-gunners stood by for eight and a half hours. The Americans were not allowed to move about. News of the detention was flashed to Washington and a protest "in the strongest terms" was made to Soviet H.Q. in Berlin. The Americans were released, but the convoy was made to return to Berlin.

FEBRUARY 2, 1959. Another United States Army convoy was held at the Western end of the autobahn, again for refusing the Russians a right to search. The Western Powers have consistently refused to concede this Russian demand, seeing it as an attempt to whittle away their right to travel freely to and from Berlin.

This time the Americans sat it out through two freezing nights with their trucks parked back to back to prevent search. THE END

Ahead for Quality

SENIOR SERVICE
Satisfy

WELL MADE
WELL PACKED

THE UNEASY HEADS · 3
by GEOFFREY BOCCA

It was like a scene from musical comedy. Red leaders honoured him and graced his Court—and from the throne he preached revolution

The king who was backed by the Communists

King Michael, with Premier Petru Groza on his right, takes the salute at a parade in Bucharest in August, 1944. It marked the anniversary of Rumania's break with Germany

THE monarchs of Rumania whirl out of the shadows of the past as out of a dream. Surely they never existed! Carmen Sylva, the poetess-queen, running barefoot, all twelve stone of her, through the dew, her hair flying . . . immoral English Marie and her sniggering husband, King Ferdinand . . . debased, debauched Carol II, jowled like a spaniel, and his mistress, Magda Lupescu.

Only Michael seems to have been normal, and it was Michael who lost his throne. Eccentricity clearly suited the Rumanian temperament better.

The royal line does not go back very far. Rumania had been a constant battleground for three mighty neighbours, Turkey, Russia and Austro-Hungary. By 1861 she had been granted an uneasy independence and looked round for a king.

The country's leader, John Bratianu, summoned a Hohenzollern prince, Karl, to run the Turkish blockade and accept the throne.

Karl called himself Carol and founded the Rumanian Hohenzollern dynasty.

King Carol I built an important state out of what had once been a Turkish vassal province. But he and his poet-wife, Queen Elizabeth, who wrote under the name of Carmen Sylva, had only one child, a daughter, who died young. Carol named a nephew, Ferdinand of Hohenzollern, as heir-apparent in 1889.

Like his uncle, Ferdinand turned himself into a Rumanian, but against the fearless and regal King, Ferdinand was an uninspiring sight. He was scrawny and dirty and his face was yellow. When nervous he giggled.

Ferdinand showed early some of the traits which his son Carol II was to inherit so liberally. A sleazy affair with one of Carmen Sylva's ladies-in-waiting earned him the thorough disapproval of his aunts, uncles and cousins in various royal families. When seventeen-year-old Princess Marie, the daughter of the Duke of Edinburgh and granddaughter of Queen Victoria, accepted his offer of marriage, the entire royal community of Europe was aghast.

The most cursory look at the young couple together, however, would have shown which of the two would be the dominating figure. Photographs of Marie at the time indicate a quite startling similarity to Queen Elizabeth II of England. There are the same cool, straight eyes, the same strong mouth. The material she had to work with, the tongue-tied Ferdinand, was not promising, but she had made her choice and she was not a person for regrets.

Marie and Ferdinand were married at Sigmaringen in 1893. The early years for Marie in Rumania must have been a nightmare. Between Carol I and the nitwit Ferdinand there was no family love or affection. The King bullied and abused the poor prince so publicly that the servants laughed in his face.

Beautiful schemer

To hide her humiliation Marie joined the tormentors of her husband and cuckolded him outrageously.

By 1914, when Carol died, the stuffing had so been knocked out of King Ferdinand that no opinion prevailed at Court save that of Queen Marie's.

Beautiful, domineering, devious, she schemed with politicians from her home in the Sinaia Palace and filled out the horizons of her five children so completely that nearly forty years later an American psychiatrist was telling her daughter, Princess Ileana: "You must get rid of your mother-complex and stand on your own feet."

The death of Carol I meant the end of German influence in Rumania. Marie was a loyal niece of Edward VII and in 1916 Marie swung her husband into declaring war against the Central Powers. The German Hohenzollerns, furious, wrote Ferdinand out of the

In 1955, now without a throne, Michael plays with his wife and family in their temporary home, Shaw's house at Ayot St. Lawrence

The uneasy heads

continued from previous page

family, and the German Army speedily obliterated Rumania.

Ferdinand's nerves shattered like glass and he actually wrote to the Emperor Charles of Austria for asylum in Vienna. This extraordinary request appealed to Charles's sense of humour, and he agreed. But by that time Queen Marie had heard about it, and dragged her husband off to Jassy where the remnants of the Rumanian Army, nation and Court were holding out. By this one action Marie saved the throne of Rumania and enabled Ferdinand to survive the war as the only reigning Hohenzollern.

Young Prince Carol, Marie's son, had served without distinction in the war. He was a pretty youth and his mother loved him. She was, after all, young enough to be his sister.

The problem of finding him a wife was an important one. Carol, left momentarily on his own initiative, married a Rumanian *mondaine* called Zizi Lambrino, and had a son by her whom he sentimentally called Mircea, after a brother who died in infancy.

The shock throughout Rumanian ruling circles was great and a divorce was hastily rushed through.

Marie's scheming mind was at work on a suitable match, and she married Carol off to Princess Helen of Greece. But Carol made Helen pregnant and forgot about her.

He took up with an astonishing, plump, snow-faced, red-headed Jewess called Elena Lupescu, with whom he was to spend the rest of his life. Lupescu had been miscalled Magda in a European newspaper and the name stuck. During the war she had been popular with the troops and one, an officer called Tampeanu, went as far as marrying her, but she shed him when she met Carol.

After a violent quarrel in the Sinaia Palace with his parents, Carol stormed out, renounced his claim to the throne in a rage, accepted a royal hush-hush cheque for £150,000, and went to live in Paris with Magda.

Meanwhile a child of the loveless union between Helen and Carol yielded a boy, Michael.

Carol is furious

It was into a family stunned with shame that the golden-haired child arrived. The name of Michael's father was not mentioned in his home. And when, on July 20, 1927, Ferdinand died, it was Michael and not Carol who was proclaimed King.

In Paris Carol was furious, and forces in Rumania were moving to his advantage. Expressions were heard more and more loudly that a King playing in his nursery and his Greek mother were not enough to keep Rumanian politics from sliding deeper into the swamps of corruption. In 1930, Julius Maniu, the Prime Minister, agreed with all parties to recall Carol, and Carol graciously accepted. He also accepted the all-important proviso, that Lupescu be left behind. The abandoned Magda rose to the occasion before the assembled newspaper reporters of Paris.

"My enemies say I am a woman scorned," she cried. "The choice is entirely mine. I renounced my perfect love and gave my heart over to the executioners to be crucified and tortured as they saw fit, and the least my enemies can do now is to give me credit for the sacrifice I made."

Nobody gave a thought to the child King who turned to his distraught mother and asked: "How can Papa be king when I am king?"

So ended the first reign of King Michael and the beginning of the reign of his father.

The moment he arrived his loved ones scattered. The bewildered Michael was packed off to camp for the building of bone and muscle.

Three weeks later, King Carol called Maniu and greeted him with tears in his eyes. He told the Rumanian statesman that he was unable to live without Elena Lupescu.

"She is the other half of my being, the other half of my mind," he said.

He revealed between sobs that Lupescu was back in Rumania. Maniu realized that, for a clever man, he had been most easily duped.

A turbulent period began. A Lupescu cabal ruled at court. A green-shirted organization called the Iron Guard grew powerful, hunting down the Jews and aping the Nazis.

Queen Marie died in 1938, lonely, isolated, bitter. Elections held in the same year disappointed Carol and, declaring them null and void, he whipped up a hasty oral plebiscite which gave him a free hand and made him the only royal dictator in Europe. Trying to play off the great powers of Europe against each other he signed worthless treaties and pacts, winning great victories of diplomacy that got him nowhere.

In his spare time he ate like a glutton, and designed more and more magnificent uniforms. His passion for uniforms, which became an international joke, began at a Boy Scout jamboree. Carol turned up in a simple scout uniform, and the boys, not recognizing him, hailed his military aide instead.

There is also a credit side to Carol's reign. He encouraged the rival powers to interest themselves in Rumania's riches, oil and wheat, and was responsible for a considerable economic boom. He reformed the army and brought it up to a first-class fighting trim. He supervised Michael's education strictly and made sure that he was not mollycoddled by his friends.

The fall of France ended the *drôle de guerre* with a vengeance and there was no place in Europe for a royal clown in an oil-rich country like Rumania. Germany leaned ever so lightly on the Rumanian house of cards and Carol collapsed.

The Iron Guard converged on the palace shouting, "Give us the King! Give us Lupescu, the she-wolf!" Like his father before him in a previous war, Carol lost his nerve. He appealed to Hitler for asylum in Germany. "All right," said the Fuehrer without enthusiasm, "but I won't take the woman."

Marshal Ion Antonescu, the swaggering chief of the military junta, appeared at the Palace to demand Carol's abdication. While the King haggled for terms with a whine, Michael, next door, aged nineteen, and completely baffled by it all, burst into tears.

Switzerland offered to give Carol transit facilities, and the King signed. Antonescu provided an escort to Bucharest railway station, where the royal train had had steam up for two days. The entourage consisted of Carol, Lupescu and their faithful aide, Ernesto Urdareanu, three military aides, the director of the royal train, the commander of the Royal Guard and several servants, two pekingese dogs and three poodles, a saloon car and eight other cars packed with trunks, and even motor cars.

On the way word came that a crowd of Iron Guards was waiting in Temisora to take out Lupescu and shoot her.

Lupescu collapsed in hysterics. The train which had planned to take on water in Temisora went roaring through the station, taking the Guards by surprise. Lupescu had taken refuge in the bath and Carol gallantly hurled himself on top of her for protection.

Thus, in the bath-tub with his mistress, King Carol II of Rumania left his native land for the last time.

Michael was once more King and under the most humiliating circumstances. Antonescu was determined to keep the boy in his place, and Michael himself, full of hesitation and self-doubts, wilted quickly under Antonescu's unconcealed contempt.

"You are a child and know nothing," he said, if ever the King made any kind of protest. The dictator also kept Michael in a state of insecurity by threatening to transfer his crown to the family of Michael's aunt, Princess Ileana.

Ileana, a woman of great beauty was married to Archduke Anton of Austria, and had two sons and four daughters. She was Antonescu's protégé and the dictator succeeded in driving a wedge between her and Michael which persists to this day. Ileana, living in the United States, and Michael living in Switzerland, have no communication whatever with each other.

Antonescu announced publicly that he had invited Michael's mother to return to Rumania to "complete her son's education." When Queen Helen arrived she found Antonescu's stupid and ambitious wife taking precedence over her, and signing her letters "Maria" in the royal manner.

Carol had done a good job on Michael's education. Michael was now six feet three inches tall and broad-shouldered. His passion was for mechanics and motor cars, and he had worked in a Ford motor factory for a while. He smiled seldom, and had little sense of humour, but he had a fine sense of resolution and intellectual integrity.

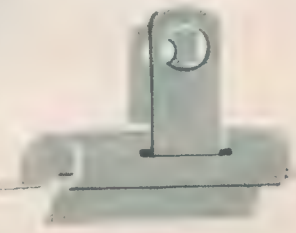
Joined with Hitler

He had been back on the throne a year when Antonescu took Rumania into the war on the German side and joined in Hitler's attack on Russia.

Rumania, thanks to Carol's reform, fought a brave war. She supplied more troops, conquered more territory and fought infinitely more bravely than the Italians who were ostensibly Germany's principal allies. The Rumanians outfought the Russians, captured and annexed Odessa, plundered huge areas and carried out mass executions.

But the tide turned. Russia began to push the Axis troops back.

Michael and his advisers believed that the only hope for Rumania was to get out of the war and throw themselves on the mercy of America and Britain, whom they hoped would temper the barbarity of Russian occupation. Between them and their plans



THE WITNESS STATES

INVESTIGATION:

The murder of Marilyn Porter, found beaten over the head in her cabin in the liner Adelphi.

FIRST WITNESS:

I am Dr. Harold Whitten. I was called to Miss Porter's cabin at eleven o'clock this morning. A steward had found her lying with her head badly damaged. The ship had rolled heavily at three in the morning and my first thought was that she had fallen out of bed and injured herself. This had happened to several other passengers. On examination I found she had been attacked. I estimate that her death took place at some time between midnight and one o'clock in the morning.

SECOND WITNESS:

My name is William Russell and I am the steward who found Miss Porter. I thought something was wrong when I saw the glass of milk and rum on the ledge outside her door. It was full and untouched, just as I'd left it at twelve o'clock the night before. Miss Porter never turned in without having her nightcap. I usually took it into her cabin, but last night she didn't answer my knock. I heard a man's voice inside and thought she didn't want to be disturbed, so I just left the glass on the ledge. I wouldn't swear to it but I think the man with Miss Porter spoke like an American.

THIRD WITNESS:

I am Percy Moore, a dining-room waiter, and I can verify that Miss Porter was with a man last night. She was dining and dancing with another passenger, Mr. Webster Hoffman, until about half past eleven, when they seemed to be having a disagreement. Miss Porter left in a hurry and he followed her out. I noticed that he had a piece of sticking-plaster on his face this morning.

FOURTH WITNESS:

I am Webster P. Hoffman. Certainly I was with Marilyn Porter last night in her cabin. I'd said something that annoyed her and I wanted to apologize. I heard the steward knock at the door, but Marilyn said not to bother answering. We were good friends again by then. I left a few minutes later. The sticking-plaster? I fell out of bed—ask anyone if this ship didn't roll like an old cow last night. I hurt my face. But I didn't murder that girl, and I've no idea at all who did.

Who did? Turn to page 30 for the Inspector's comment

stood one man, the ruthless Fascist dandy, Ion Antonescu.

It was life or death, now or never, and Michael steeled himself to his task. He summoned the dictator to a memorable interview.

Antonescu's rough, heavy face was impatient when he came in and his salute was perfunctory. "Long live your Majesty," he said.

Michael put his hand below his desk and silently switched on a dictaphone, so that nothing might be lost.

"There is no time to lose," he said. "In spite of the representations I have made to you, you have brought the country to a situation from which only the immediate cessation of hostilities and expulsion of the Germans can save it."

Antonescu sneered and turned to go. "You are mistaken," he said rudely.

Michael snapped back: "Please accustom yourself to addressing me correctly. What is this 'you'?"

Antonescu was taken by surprise and started to stammer. "You—Your Majesty . . . is nervous today."

"Yes, because when I called you this morning you treated me as a mere nothing." Michael thumped the table and shouted. "I do not permit you to take liberties with my person. Do you think I can permit you to usurp my prerogatives and simply look on like a fool while my country crumbles away?"

"And who is destroying it?" demanded Antonescu, as angry as Michael.

"All of you," said the King wildly, and becoming incoherent. ". . . You have no time for the king of this country."

"I wish to tell you that you are mistaken if you think you can save the country by an armistice."

"I have not called on you to ask your advice or for your opinion. The purpose for which I have called you is for you to transmit this telegram concerning the cessation of hostilities to the United Nations."

He handed a slip of paper to Antonescu, who read it coldly. "Who composed it?" he asked.

"What does it matter to you?" said the King. "If you do not accept it I shall send it myself."

"How can you imagine the Marshal can betray his German allies and throw them into the arms of the Russians?"

Michael began shouting again. "Who is doing the betraying, you or the Germans? Did you guarantee Germany's frontiers, or Germany Rumania's?"

"Why are you shouting? I am not deaf."

"Yes, you are," said the King. "Otherwise you would have heard the murmuring of the country. In short, Marshal, will you send the telegram?"

"No—in that form, no."

"How then?"

"I must contact Germany."

"What?" cried the King. "Are we bargaining here, Mister Antonescu?"

"*Marshal* Antonescu."

"*Mister* Antonescu. For the four years you have been usurping my rights, you have neither my confidence nor my sympathy. For months I have been working with the opposition to save my country. You, I know, consider me a stupid, stammering child. My Rumanians will judge that. But if you consider me to be a traitor, you will be completely disillusioned. I am the King of my country and your King. I wish to save the country—and nobody can prevent me."

Antonescu arrested

"Your Majesty is young and inexperienced," said Antonescu.

"You are wrong. Suffering is an experience," said Michael bitterly. "I am the commander of the army and the order has been given."

Antonescu was thunder-struck. "Given? What order? Does your Majesty know that your Majesty might lose the throne?"

"Are you threatening me?" said Michael furiously. "Do you think you have the power to order anyone any more? From now on, I will make the decisions. You are under arrest."

The King pressed a push-button. The doors of the King's study were thrown open, and a handful of the King's guards pushed through with their guns. Antonescu wheeled round and yelled, "What! I, the Marshal of the country? No!"

The King was calm now. "Nonsense," he said. "Take him away. . . ."

The German High Command was told that Rumania had taken herself out of the war. All the time the Russians were advancing. The country was in chaos.

It had been a fantastic adventure, but as the war left Rumania behind and swept into Germany, a new sequence of events began for Michael.

Out of Moscow now came a band of Rumanian expatriates, many of whom Michael had never heard of, and were efficiently taking over the country.

Michael, dazed, tried to form a government in the traditional way. He called on old Prince Stirbey, a former lover of Queen Marie's, who had once had his face slapped in public by King Carol. Instead he found himself face to face with Andrei Vishinsky, specially flown in from Russia, who "suggested" instead that he appointed a Moscow stooge, Petru Groza, a wealthy, landowning Rumanian Communist.

Strange leaders

The war ended and the cold war began. A Red façade called the National Democratic Front took over, and Michael found himself dealing with politicians completely alien to anything in his experience.

Not the least extraordinary figure was his new Foreign Secretary, a woman called Ana Pauker, who had not even bothered to change her citizenship back from Russian to Rumanian. She was a big woman, quite attractive and even girlish in her personal manner, with intense blue eyes and a baby's smile.

Michael became more and more of a royal curiosity. He was the only king reigning behind the Iron Curtain. Every moment it seemed he would be deposed, yet he hung on from day to day and month to month, until it began to stretch into a year and then two years.

The Communists seemed perfectly happy to put up with a king, and the scene would have done justice to a modern musical comedy. After all, if Communists accept the King as titular head they must accept the forms of monarchy too, and this the Rumanians did.

The craziest paradoxes prevailed. Patriotic rallies would be decorated with huge pictures of Lenin, Stalin, Groza, Ana Pauker—and King Michael. The Russians decorated the King with the Soviet Order of Victory. Communist policy was declared in speeches from the throne. On social occasions the Red leaders appeared before the King in white tie and tails.

But the royal family was desperately lonely. It is an illustration of the family's isolation that they were obliged to turn for friendship to Ana Pauker. Ana enjoyed the royal patronage. Princess Ileana, Michael's sister, tells how Ana, after taking tea with her, asked politely, "Should you dismiss me, or should I leave? I have enjoyed this charming conversation so much that I have forgotten just what the protocol is."

The royal farce could not last. The Communists could not afford even with the nicest sense of humour to keep the King as a rallying-point for anti-Communist sentiment in the country. The government well knew that there were not more than a thousand Communists in all Rumania before the war. The moment Communist discipline was relaxed everybody who hated the régime, which meant nearly everybody in the country, would flock around Michael.

In the non-Communist half of the world, the summer of 1947 found two marriages being arranged, both of considerable interest to Michael.

Princess Elizabeth, heir to the throne of England, had become engaged to his childhood friend, Prince Philip of Greece, now a handsome, embarrassed young man in the Royal Navy. And

continued on page 32

GILBERT HARDING SAYS...

I'm ready to go Italian

A READER, who hoped to rouse my ire, has been thrusting his prejudices through the bars of my cage. Did I not think, he wrote, that there was far too much Italian influence about in Britain today?

He was not so polite as that. He talked contemptuously of "oily wop ways" and seemed to be scornful of everybody who lives on the wrong side of the English Channel.

He greatly misunderstands me if he thinks that I share that old-fashioned British contempt for the food, arts, manners and customs, fashions and films of other lands. I know that many British people, who should have known better, used to have an obdurate scorn for "Continentals."

What nonsense!

It sounds incredible, but when I was a youth and went to the Auvergne to try to improve my French accent, an elderly lady we knew sniffed and said, "What nonsense! It is their business to understand us."

It was she who once had to travel from Paris to Livorno in Italy (Leghorn to her). Her son gave her most explicit instructions for the journey on the Rome express, telling her that she must change at Florence. The Italians, in what she would have called their "wrong-headed way," insist on calling that town of theirs Firenze. When the old lady reached there and was told to change, would she?

"You don't fool me," she said. "My son distinctly said Florence."

I am glad to say she was carried on to Rome.

Since those days we have changed a great deal, possibly because many more of our young people travel abroad. Now, even at home, we are prepared to do as the Romans do.

Italian designers are giving a new look to our motor cars. Italians have, I am told, a very considerable influence upon women's shoe fashions. Their fabrics, I know, are imaginative and lovely. Italian films, often produced on shoestring budgets, have made the costly products of Hollywood look cheap and the efforts of Pinewood anaemic.

Even our young bloods now cultivate the Italian look. I am only sorry that knives (so very Latin) seem to go with some of the elegant suits. We even brawl, now, in a manner more fitting to *banditti*.

As for our young women, some of them seem to have drunk so much espresso coffee that they look like Italian film starlets.

The fact is that we are experiencing a little Renaissance. Not since the sixteenth century have things Italian enjoyed such a vogue.

I remember, during the war, a friend of mine who was in Italy writing home and saying that he knew why the Italians had been knocked out of the war so quickly. In Naples—in 1943—he had bought beautiful powder-compacts and vanity boxes made of transparent plastic—then a very vital material which, in a more martial country, would have been used for making cockpit screens for aeroplanes.

"How typical of them," he wrote contemptuously. "The Eyeties would feminize anything."

They have certainly feminized, and taken all the terror out of, the motor bicycle. I feel that even I might manage to ride about on one of their trim scooters. Unlike the roaring, leaping, smelly bucking broncho that the normal motor bike is, the Italian machines are, or appear to be, quite manageable toys.

"Feminize" is, I think, the wrong word to use. It is a word of contempt, a sneer in the beefy Britisher tradition. There is little that is effeminate about the Italian male, but he is not, usually, tough, or mock-tough.

That is one reason why I welcome the Italian influence, so apparent in British life today. At least it softens and civilizes, and so some extent counter-balances, that beastly, bogus toughness that mars the American way of life and looked like doing the same to ours.

For reasons best known to himself, his psychiatrist or his mother, the American, it seems, needs to convince himself that he is tough.

The light touch

The Italians, under that hollow blusterer, Mussolini, for a time seemed to be inflicted with illusions of male grandeur. But they could not keep it up for long.

There was, in a hotel in Bari, in southern Italy, a photograph of the proprietor and most of the waiters greeting Mussolini.

When that old bull frog fell from power, and the British came, you would have expected them to burn that picture quickly. Not them. Bits of stamp-paper were stuck on it, not to hide, but rather to withdraw, their arms, once upraised in salute.

That self-mocking, light touch is apparent in so many Italian films. We need not copy them slavishly; we should not be copies of anybody.

But there is no harm in being influenced by a people who have taste and humour, and a lightness and elegance about almost everything they make and do. THE END

EARTHSHAKER powerful new novel by

Decker's last gamble

LOBENGULA, King of the once-mighty Matabele, was dead. Driven from his land by the British, the King died among only a handful of followers—including a white couple, Maria Prinsloo and Gabriel Decker. . . .

Decker, an American, had joined the great trek from Bulawayo with the intention of stealing some of the imperial treasure. He had fallen in love with Maria, a widow whose husband had died on the trek.

In accordance with tribal custom, Lobengula's body was entombed in a cave. Decker helped the old induna, Mjana, prepare the bull's hide shroud—and by rapid sleight of hand acquired the keys of the king's two diamond-filled safes. The safes were buried in a dry river-bed miles down the trail.

When all was done, Decker and Maria prepared to leave. Mjana shook hands in white fashion, evidently surprising himself by the gesture. "I wish you had been black," he told Decker gloomily. "*Hau, hau*, you are not such a bad warrior in spite of your colour."

They said the words of farewell—"Go sweetly. Walk well." Then Decker and the girl untied their horses and rode off the way they had come. . . .

FINAL INSTALMENT

THEY rode some way in silence and then she asked: "What are you going to do now?" Decker said: "See you safe to Bulawayo, if Jameson's still there and the war's really over. Then come back."

"What for?"

"The diamonds! I came to Africa for 'em. You don't think I'll leave 'em in a hole in a ditch?"

"No . . . what will you do then?"

"I'm dogged if I know *what* to do." He told her about his life as a scout. "That was grand, honey. I was just cut out for it. But that kind of job's about over. I don't know what to do. I won't have to work, o' course, with the diamonds. But I oughta have some occupation."

"You certainly must. You can't sit quietly for ten minutes without fidgeting. Have you thought of farming?" She knew of his early life in Wisconsin.

"Sure I've thought of it. But I came after those rocks so's I wouldn't have to grub and grind any more."

SHE looked over at him; they were cantering through a scrub forest and the brief twilight was almost upon them. "I have great faith in you, Gabe. I think whatever you decide to do will be right for you."

"I wish I had that much faith in me," he said moodily.

They camped in the lee of a tall rock. They had seen no game; for supper they tightened their belts, and drank a quart of water apiece. They made a fire and lay down beside it. Soon she was resting with her head against his midriff, and he was stroking her black, straight shock of hair. She said: "Why'd you fall in love with me?"

"What a dumb question," he said. "'Cause I did, that's why."

"If you'd had a sensible answer I'd have been terribly disappointed," she said in vast content.

"You have any sensible reasons yourself?"

"No! I can tell you why I like you, though. You're absolutely straightforward, for one thing."

"You're out of your head," he said with honest amazement.

"I mean it. In your own fashion—and the way I see it, everyone's virtues are their own and a little different from anyone else's—in your way you're thoroughly straight."

"I came over twelve thousand miles to swindle a fortune. I made a poor old man trust me——"

"But you didn't steal from him! I'll wager I can tell you what you thought when you heard of him: 'There's a great black savage murdering and stealing, and I'm going to relieve him of some of his ill-got gains.' Then you met Lobengula, and grew to understand him, and by the time he trusted you it was because he *could*."

"I never thought any such noble damn thing. I thought: 'There's a handsome sight o' money. I want it.'"

"Pooh," she said comfortably, rubbing the back of her head against his stomach. "You like to think of yourself as a rogue, but when you come to the deed you find an excuse."

"Well," Decker said, "I admit that, when I was real well acquainted with Lobengula, I likely couldn't have stolen from him; but he was my friend then."

"Can you tell me one felony of any magnitude that you've ever carried off?"

"I don't set up as a lifelong crook! But I *can* be mean as hell."

"To whom?"

"Doggone it, to you!" He spilled out the story of his trick with the Mashona boy in Victoria. "I not only put you in my debt and probably started your tender feelings towards me, I'da got that poor kid shot if you'd had a gun by you. I've thought of that since. You might have killed him."

She began to giggle. It rose to a shout of laughter. "Oh, Gabe," she said, "that is my Gabe! You didn't think of it beforehand, did you? Or you wouldn't have done it?"

"That's true," he admitted.

"And whom did you hurt? Me? Good Lord, wasn't I better off riding west with you than if I'd gone alone? Oh, I love it!"

HE asked hesitantly: "Why, when you got hurt bad by somebody else's ornery wiles, do you take mine so light?"

"It isn't fair, is it? Oh, it *is* fair. Because if he—if Ernst had set up such a deception, he wouldn't have given tuppence if I'd shot the Mashona. It would have broken your heart. That's part of the difference."

They rested in companionable silence. Then Decker began to chuckle.

"What is it?" she asked.

He said: "I was thinking about that two-timing half-breed Jacobs, when he tries to follow that map."

"What map?"

"I drew him a route, Bulawayo to where the swag's buried. He can't find his way from one tree to the next without directions."

"But if he has a map——"

"Oh, he can use it all right, if he goes to Arizona Territory; it'll take him from Tombstone over the Gila into the Sierra Apache mountains. God knows what he might find."

A little later: "Maria," he said, "did you stick with the King because I asked you to stick, or for his sake?"

"Partly both, and partly to see how it would all end. I had to see the whole terrible business to its finish. It was fascinating and horrible and I'll remember it all my life."

"That's how I felt. He was a king, and doomed, and I had to go on with him. And now I'm going to appropriate his diamonds."

"They're no good to anyone in the ground, and the Matabele will never dig them up. . . ."

"You don't figure there's something sneaky about takin' them?"

"Just a bit. . . . But suppose you don't get the diamonds, would you feel cheated?"

He regarded her quizzically. "Well, I'd figure that I'd got a little something for my trouble."

She turned over, smiling, pillowed on him, and closed her eyes. When he had thought of something else he'd wanted to say to her, she had fallen asleep.

AFTER no more than half-an-hour's ride next morning they overtook the induna, Manyao. They swung down off the horses and told him the news.

Tears fell from the induna's sunken eyes. "The last king is dead," he said.

"Where is Losikeyi, his great wife?"

"There are many people who live in these parts," said Manyao. "They hid at the passage of the soldiers, but seeing that I was but one man herding a cow, they came out to speak with me."

"And Losikeyi?"

"One can always sell a cow," said Manyao calmly. "Especially when it is large and plump."

"What price did you get for her, you old rascal?" asked Maria.

"A number of powerful charms. One will protect me from bullets, one from smallpox, and there is one to make maidens love me."

"A good bargain," said Decker, nodding. "Where are you going, Manyao?"

"To my Enxa kraal. The English may have burned it, but somewhere nearby my people will be waiting."

"Get on my horse, then. I feel like walking."

"It is a kind act, Dakwa. I seem to have grown much older in these last days." Gratefully he let himself be assisted to mount.

The three of them travelled steadily for a couple of days, Decker and Manyao taking turns in the saddle. At last, clearing the fly belt, they reached a point where Manyao's path and the whites' diverged. "Walk well," said the induna, pressing their hands between his own. "Will I see you again, Dakwa? And your woman?"

Maria said: "You will see us, Manyao."

"Then my heart is clear." He fumbled in his pouch and drew out a tiny skin bag ornamented with pink and white beads. "Take this, Dakwa. It is the charm against bullets. I think no one will bother to shoot at me again, but you are young and a warrior."

Decker stuffed it into the holster behind the scalp. "Thank you, my friend." He gave Manyao his pocket knife of many blades. "Take this and remember me when you use it."

"It is a magnificent present," said Manyao. He turned it over on his palm, looking at it with awe. "It is a gift for a king. Walk well, Dakwa."

"Eat many cattle, Manyao. . . .

Almost a month of 1894 was gone when they eventually came to Bulawayo. Here, after a week of deferring, Decker turned back to the northland.

"I'm going to Victoria tomorrow," said Maria, hanging to his hand with fifty men grinning and looking the other way. "Oh, do take care, Gabe. Look out for lions——"

"Don't fuss, honey."

"No. Do take care. Are you sure you want me to keep your revolver?"

"The war's over. I guess a rifle and a shotgun'll do me. Goodbye, Maria. Don't fall for any pretty Englishman."

"Oh," she said, "you do love me, don't you?"

He smiled. "Just get your marryin' outfit ready, and watch out that Deadhead don't over-eat; and I'll be back before you can spit twice." He gripped her hand hard and let it go, turned the roan and with a kick sent it racing, the muck spraying from its heels.

IN the evening Decker shot a gemsbok, a great antelope with a black and white face and three-foot horns, and spent the night making biltong from its dry meat. Without sleep, he set off at dawn and covered as many miles before dark as the King's wagons had trekked in two weeks.

He reached the Kana. Here were the faint traces of the fires where the Matabele had roasted their oxen. He got off and stood in the rain, and could almost see the old King limping toward

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

"Suppose you don't get the diamonds," Maria said, "would you feel cheated?" Decker looked at her quizzically. "Well, I'd figure that I'd get a little something for my trouble," he said

For months he had schemed to get the diamonds. And now that they were his for the taking he must ride away—for Maria's sake

Earthshaker

continued from page 20

him, murmuring in a ghostly voice: "I see you, Captain. I am glad that you live."

The next evening a chilling wind rose, carrying a drizzle from the lowlands. All night he shivered in his blankets but his spirits were high.

Dusk was coming again when he neared the site of the treasure. He took off his soaked hat and beat it on his thigh. "Three more miles too much, feller?" he asked Isitwatwa.

When he rode up the rise and reined in the great trench was already in shadow. He squinted hard at it. Then he uttered a hoarse, wild cry, and slammed his feet against the horse's sides. They flew downhill.

"It's a mirage," he shouted rabidly, not accepting what he saw. It could not have happened. Not this month after an unknown host of centuries. Coincidence was not that savage.

Hauling up at the ditch, he leaped off and fell to his knees in the mud at the edge. It was true. Dear God, there it was, no mirage, no insanity of his straining eyes. In the eight-foot-deep furrow ran a good four feet of churning, foaming, filthy yellow water.

Slowly he realized that he was not necessarily beaten; even if the flood had torn out the loosely packed hole in the bank, and tumbled the great tusks away, there was a solid wall of rock protecting the two iron safes.

A kind of despairing optimism was born in him. There was half an hour of light remaining.

He led Isitwatwa downstream. There was a stunted mimosa on the opposite side of the hillock. He'd have to tie the horse to that. He passed under the brow of the little kopje. He glanced up as he did so, and for a moment thought he had seen a man sitting there. When he looked again the rain shut off the top from view.

Every instant of daylight counted, yet he had to go up and check on what he thought he'd glimpsed. Leaving his horse tied, he cocked the shotgun and ran up the hummock.

SURE enough, a man was sitting there. Decker squatted angrily before him. In that moment he knew exactly what had happened.

"I see you, induna."

"I see you, Dakwa." The commander-in-chief of all the beaten Matabele armies favoured him with a brief gesture of the hand. "I have been looking for you. See how I have prepared for your coming." He made a grimace.

"How did you do it, Mjana?"

"Slowly I removed the rocks, some as big as my head, some greater than my chest. Much of the earth I tore away with my assegai. Then the water began to come through the wall, seeping at first, then at last, when I had taken away enough rocks, in spurting fountains."

Decker gazed at him in wonder. This old man, weakened by months of privation and trembling with the shock of his king's defeat and death, had come here and with his slim hands had torn down a prehistoric dam some twelve feet high and fourteen feet thick.

"It was a deed, Mjana," he said grudgingly. "It was a man's deed."

"It was a thing which had to be done. I told the Black Bull to kill you and Jacobs, but he would not do it. So, since it is not fitting that a great king's treasure be looted by aliens, I have sent it towards the Zambezi."

"*Ehe*, that is true."

"You are a fighter, Dakwa," said Mjana wearily, "but you are a white man. It is not your fault. I no longer hate you for it."

"I came back to take some diamonds," said Decker, nodding, "but I would not have stolen from Lobengula while he was alive."

"I believe that. I do not say you are not a *good* white man. I simply say you are white."

"What will you do now?"

"Wait here until I see that nothing is left. Then go south to give my spear to M'lodzi." M'lodzi was the Matabele name for Rhodes.

"I will leave you, since what I came for is gone. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Why should you help me? I destroyed what you sought."

"It was a man's deed," repeated Decker.

"Then, if you have tobacco? I have not tasted tobacco for longer than I can remember," said Mjana a little pitifully.

Decker took out a pipe he had obtained in Bulawayo and gave it to the induna with his pouch of tobacco and a fistful of matches. Mjana thanked him quietly.

Decker rose. "Stay well then, *inkosi*."

"Go well, white man."

DECKER walked down the hill in the gathering darkness. To save his soul he couldn't hate the old Kaffir.

On the veld, he ran as fast as he could to the river. Mjana could not see this far in the gloom and rain. Here was the spot; he dropped and looked over the edge. Below him the bank was caving in.

He went upstream on his hands and knees and reached a place where the slope tilted. Here he stripped to the trousers and was about to lower himself into the yellow water when he thought of his spade.

He dashed back to Isitwatwa for it, and when he reached the river again the darkness was absolute.

With reckless haste, not giving himself the chance to think, he put his legs over the edge, turned on his belly, let himself down the slippery bank till he was hanging by his free hand, and let go. The cold, powerful waters closed on him with a bubbling snarl.

The chill numbed his blood at once and seemed to snatch all feeling from his body. He clawed at the bank, lost it, and thought he was a dead man; for he could not swim two strokes.

Struggling with maniacal determination, he broke water and hurled himself forward. Hard earth was there, and he drove his fingers into it, curling his naked feet in search of toeholds.

As a man on a mountainside would use an ice axe, he drove the chisel-like point of the spade into the earth to his right, and inched down past it, clinging to the bank. The river brawled angrily about him, trying to upset him.

At last he reached the cavity. Standing sidelong to the current he pulled his spade loose and with his feet wide apart plunged his head below the dirty water, prodding into the cavity with the tool held in both fists.

He fought his way up against the flood and sucked air again. It was a

continued on page 34

Author! Author!

My wife's a prolific though little-known writer,
Outstanding, indeed, of her sex.
She doesn't write poems, and books don't excite her,
She concentrates wholly on cheques.

RICHARD ARMOUR

Note From The Head

I have now read Lucy's composition myself and I am afraid I agree with Miss Thomas's comment. *A Day In The Life Of A Tiger* should not consist simply of snarls.

The fact that you gave up a Saturday afternoon to take Lucy to see real tigers in the zoo, and watched her spelling the sounds you elicited by offering the animals food and waving a coloured handkerchief at them, reflects great credit on the serious way you take your duty to her, and I quite agree that she has been very clever in inventing different combinations of letters to represent the various sounds. But vivid accounts of living and hunting in the jungle naturally got better marks than three whole pages filled with such things as "Scrch! Hwang! Crsrk!"

Although Lucy is a very keen worker and I am sure she will do well, at present she sometimes falls behind the rest of the class because of the way she misinterprets her teacher's instructions. You may remember the difficulty she had when she was asked to write about *A Day In The Life Of William The Conqueror* and made it his first birthday and filled her essay with gurgles.

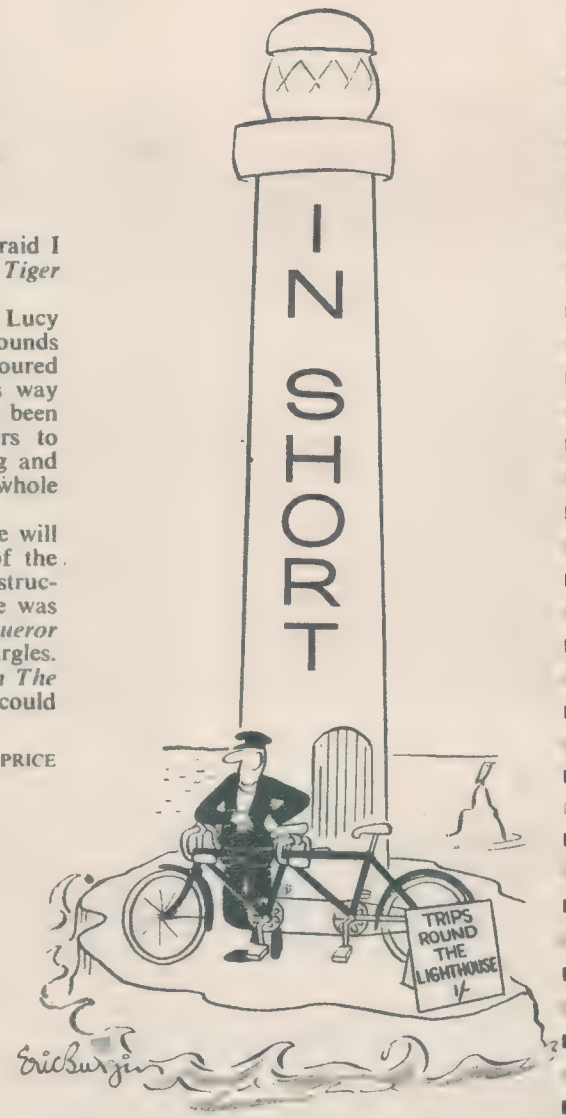
I understand that her next composition will be *A Day In The Life Of A Watch*—and I should be most grateful if you could encourage her to write in English, not ticks.

R. G. G. PRICE

Girls' Best Friends

Good looks are helpful to the lasses
Who hope to join the married masses,
And figures good in shorts and halters
Are helpful, too, in reaching altars,
And, likewise, aptitude for baking
Is helpful in that undertaking. . . .
But none have proved—none of the others—
As helpful as determined mothers.

HAL CHADWICK



Sally Goes Shopping

Why was it, Sally asked me, that some things were wrapped so hygienically that you had to prise them open with a chisel, and others were shovelled straight into your clean shopping bag—especially brussels sprouts which left bits behind them, and potatoes which rained earth?

If only, she said, there were some principle behind it all, she wouldn't mind so much. But it maddened her to see a chemist parcelling up toothpaste, which already had its own box, in strong brown paper, string and sometimes even sealing wax, while the baker, selling impregnable biscuits with one hand, gave her bread in an inadequate shift of tissue paper with the other.

Only last night she'd come off worst in a searing struggle with some cheese, which was lurking inside what she could only describe as a *hide* of some synthetic substance it had probably taken years of laboratory work to perfect.

At first, unsuspecting, she tried to peel it off with her fingers, to find that it had been welded together in some irrevocable way which resisted her attempts with a table knife, a saw-edged breadknife, a tin-opener, a pair of embroidery scissors and a razor-blade, whose edge it simply turned.

After a savage attack with the garden shears and a pitiful failure with the game carvers, Sally left the cheese there, smug and secure. She was waiting, she said, till she could get hold of a blowlamp.

DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

Are we missing the chance of good health?

Wise families spend their money on good housing; it pays a rich dividend in better health, say doctors

Startling new facts show that today everyone can keep fit. It all depends on the way we spend our money

by Dr. BRIAN ANSON

TODAY, a schoolteacher, although he may ruefully compare his income with that of a lorry driver, may still comfort himself with the knowledge that his is the longer and healthier life.

Since the war, there has been a revolution in wage scales. No longer do the dirtier jobs go with poverty. The dustman gets more than the librarian, the docker as much as many young doctors. But, in spite of this levelling out in money, there has been no corresponding levelling out in health. You will live longer in a profession than on the production line.

Statisticians, in the office of the Registrar-General, are not, of course, concerned with "class" in the sense of an aristocracy, a bourgeoisie and a proletariat. For practical research into health, they have divided us into five classes—1. Professional people, officers in the services, stockbrokers, bank managers and the like; 2. People such as farmers and owners of small businesses; 3. Skilled artisans and craftsmen; 4. The semi-skilled; 5. The unskilled.

With two exceptions—polio and coronary thrombosis, which for special reasons affect "top people"—sickness, death and infantile mortality rates all increase as you go down this scale. For example, the infantile death rate is: class one, 17.9 per thousand; class two, 22.5; class three, 28.4; class four, 34.5; class five, 41.1.

The mental health figures are even more striking. Admissions to hospital for schizophrenia per 100,000 are: class one, 51; class two, 57; class three, 93; class four, 103; class five, 229.

It isn't just luck

Dr. Jeremy Morris, Director of Social Medicine Research for the Medical Research Council, says that good health is not now a question of money, of the size of the family, or even of the age at which mothers bear children. In these things there is so little difference. He suggests two main reasons.

The first is what we call "culture lag." Medical and scientific discoveries often wait for many years before their implications spread through the community. Diphtheria immunization, for example, is based on the Schick test discovered in 1913. The first World War held up its practical application, but many people, mostly in the professional classes, were having their babies immunized from 1920 onwards. Yet we went on having thousands of deaths from this disease until a nation-wide immunization campaign was started in 1940.

The same reluctance to take advantage of preventive measures can be seen today. Although free polio immunization is available for all people aged between fifteen and twenty-six, only six per cent had had it done until recently, when the death of footballer Jeff Hall scared many people into taking advantage of the offer.

This question of culture lag is a matter of education. The well-educated citizen reads and discusses problems of health, takes an intelligent interest in them and tries to conform. He realizes that health is not a thing which can be left entirely to the doctors, but is enormously a matter for the citizen himself, not only in his private life, but in the pressure he can bring to bear on questions of housing, infant welfare, air pollution and so on.

The class five citizen is apt to look on illness as some form of bad luck which has been visited upon him, and from which others can rescue him.

Following directly from this matter of culture lag is the second reason for bad health. Although incomes have risen, and the people in classes four and five often have as much money to spend as those in classes one and two, they spend their money in different ways. The upper classes value housing amenities—a pleasant garden, separation from their neighbours, which gives them peace and quiet and less contact with infection. The lower you go down the scale, the more reluctant people are to put aside money for this. They are often not prepared to cumber themselves with a mortgage and move out of a rented council house, preferring to spend their money on television sets, washing machines, scooters and expensive toys for the children, even foreign travel. These things are desirable, but they do not contribute to health in the way that good living conditions do.

The less educated, too, are often less particular about their food. Some are uncritical of the sort of shop or café where food is kept and served unhygienically, putting up with the assistant who licks her fingers before picking up a wrapper. The sort of people who are in the top health brackets take their custom to the shop where food is kept in a refrigerator and handled with implements, and go to restaurants where the waitress has clean hands.

Sickness rates consistently vary, not only between social classes but between jobs. Coalminers always have a higher infant mortality rate than textile workers, who in turn have a higher rate than clerks. And it is not a question of money, for of the three, the miner is now probably the richest.

As a doctor who enters homes of all kinds, I can give two examples of the way the revolution in money earnings has not affected people's way of life—as it should have done.

I know a family who live in a forty-year-old council house, with three bedrooms, one living-room and a kitchen-scullery. The place is scrupulously clean, but the people live on top of one another.

The father is a semi-skilled worker who earns £15 a week. The eldest son did well at school and is a minor civil servant, also earning £15. One daughter, aged eighteen, is a hairdresser. She earns £8. The younger son, odd-job boy at a radio shop, gets £5. The younger girl is still at school.

Today, £43 a week is going into that house. It is nicely furnished. They have television and a washing machine. There is even a communal car. Yet mother has bronchitis, father rheumatism, the elder boy persistent indigestion.

None of them is really fit all the time, and a visit to the doctor is as much a part of their way of life as a weekly visit to the cinema.

These people could afford to move to a better neighbourhood, but they have always lived where they are and would

Are we missing the chance of good health?

continued from previous page

feel uprooted and friendless in a residential suburb.

Compare this with another home where there are also four children. Father is a schoolmaster. He supplements his salary by private coaching, and his total income is about £30 a week. But there is no additional income from children's earnings. The eldest daughter is at a university, the three boys at grammar schools.

Financially they are worse off than the council house family, for these children have to be kept in clothes and pocket money, and maintained in the holidays. Yet they have a large, old, four-bedroomed house, and although two of the boys have to "double-up" their bedroom is amply big enough. Furniture and decorations are all rather shabby and there is no television set, but this family is happy and healthy.

A heartening change

While all the common diseases, such as heart disease (except coronary thrombosis), tuberculosis, rheumatism, bronchitis, peptic ulcers, even cancer of the stomach, are more common lower down the social scale, there is one heartening change taking place. Among children between one and two years old the big gap in mortality which existed is rapidly closing. In 1930 mortality in this age group in class one was 4·5 per thousand; in class five, twenty-three. In 1950 the mortality in class one was down to 1·9—less than half; but the mortality in class five had shrunk to 3·1, almost an eighth.

This, of course, ties up with the really astounding improvement in children's health since 1939. There is no doubt that, with increased prosperity, people do give priority to their children.

In these days, when opportunity is open to brains, personality and enterprise, nobody has to stay in the social class in which he was born.

I knew a man, fifteen years ago, who laid carpets for a big store: class four, semi-skilled. He had a row with the foreman and was given notice. His reaction was to set up in business for himself. He was a practical man and he knew about carpets. He now runs his own business, employs a score of men and is prosperous. He, unlike many, did not stay in his council house.

He is now in class two, and I can vouch for a tremendous improvement in the health of both himself and his family.

The serious lesson to be learned from all this is that rising standards of living, abolition of poverty, do not in themselves result in improved health.

As unskilled and semi-skilled workers become better off they must learn how to spend their money—and how to save some of it.

A car, a Continental holiday and a bigger weekly investment in the pools will not benefit them as would more living space, more real amenities—and a much better understanding of hygiene and elementary preventive medicine.

Today many more people understand the virtues of education. More parents are enabling bright children to stay at school after the age of fifteen.

The Welfare State and the Health Service will not of themselves give us the healthy nation we could have until everybody realizes the things which are really worth having: clean air, clean food, room to move and quiet in which to think.

Without health nothing is of value. We must learn how to spend our money, how to adjust our values. Ultimately, only the educationist can put things right.

THE END

Everybody's Puzzling

BRAIN TEASER by Fred Borders

How many minutes is it since noon, if in 3 hours it will be 5 times as many minutes to 4 p.m.?

QUIZZLE

The letters in numbered squares, if placed in the small grid to the left of the puzzle in numerical sequence, will spell a well-known quotation and help to check your solutions.

CLUE DOWN

A. The answer? Johnny was so long at the Fair.

CLUES ACROSS

A. Last letter of Greek alphabet, expressing finality.
B. Big river port of Central China.
C. Mythical fire-breathing monster.
D. Animals' innards.
E. White of egg.
F. Performance of ceremony
G. Cross breed from greyhound and terrier.
H. Chancellor of the Third Reich.
I. Descriptive of one with a sense of beauty
J. White ant.
K. Short light musket.
L. Highest male voice.
M. Woman's College at Cambridge.
N. Light fawn coloured silk.
O. Dick Turpin, for example.
P. Bold undertaking.
Q. Old traditional story of gods.
R. Ancient and old fashioned.
S. Windpipe.
T. Grate bracket? Right!
U. Base of common alcohol.
V. Spiked wheel of spur.
W. Australian missile which returns to sender.
X. Poem of pensive character.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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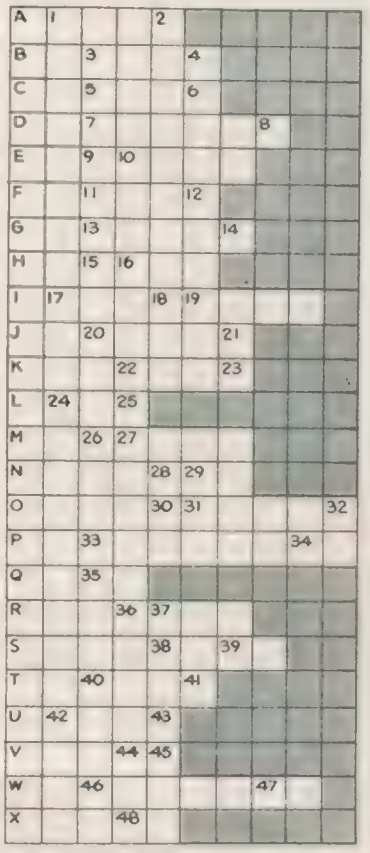


NOW TURN TO PAGE 33 FOR THE ANSWERS

My battle with the ants

continued from page 9

common black garden ant. They are *Lasius brunneus*, a reddish-brown, larger ant that came over to this country years ago from Central Europe.

"Normally they live in oak trees and they like wet, rotting timber. They are generally associated with Windsor Forest and some parts of Gloucestershire, but some have been found on Bookham Common, not far from here. This is the first time they have ever been found in a house.

With almost loving detail, he told me the possible life story of our ants. At some time or other the winged queen must have been blown into the house and found a spot she liked. Worker ants, swarming with her, chewed off her wings and they started a colony.

"*Brunneus* is a most interesting character," he went on. "Large groups of workers forage far and wide for food. Having found some, they alert the colony and the ants descend in their thousands to remove it."

He told me that they burrowed through the rotting timber, carried the wood pulp away and filled the tunnels with larvae and pupae.

I stood there horrified—and fascinated. Finally, I said: "What are we going to do about it?" He smiled and replied: "Get rid of them."

I hoped he could.

Somewhere in our beautiful house was the ant colony. But where?

The trouble is that an ant's idea of travel is not a straight line from A to Z. It's a case of follow-my-leader. The first ant discovers a way and the others follow. They might go all round the house to pick up something which is within a few feet of the colony.

So we had to trace the ants' highways and by-ways. Eventually we would draw up a chart, and it was reasonable to expect that at the point where all the trails met we would find the colony.

So we started baiting. Every few feet we placed a small tin lid with holes pierced in the sides and with the centre filled with honey. Then Alec Green, Joyce Kane and I—I was doing it day and night—observed the ants.

For seven long weeks we followed their every movement and watched them eating the honey upstairs and downstairs, in the kitchen and in the lounge, in the garage and in the loft. Where there was a bait, sooner or later there'd be a column of ants, leading to and from it.

Some of the trails were fantastically tortuous and a few were as long as fifty feet.

Ants were all over the place—in cups and saucers, on the kitchen dresser and in the cork flooring. In the larder they got into tins of golden syrup even though the lids were clamped shut.

Very soon, if I wanted to keep food overnight, I had to fill large baking tins with water, stand a saucer in the centre and place the food container on it.

Gradually, lines appeared on Alec Green's plan of the house. Some lost themselves in places into which we humans could not get; others converged at crossroads. I shall never forget the day in August when Alec Green came along with a photographer. "Mrs. Higgs," he said, "I know where the colony is."

He led me to the sun lounge, our beautiful sun lounge, thickly carpeted and with the walls panelled in warm, honey-coloured wood. He showed me the chart. There was no doubt about it. All the trails we had spent weeks tracing converged here, somewhere under the floor.

I looked at Alec Green. He had already told me that whatever we did in the house would be on my responsibility. But it was clear that the floor had to come up. "All right," I said. "Let's get on with it." We began to take up the carpets.

Two hours later we were down to the concrete foundations. Ants swarmed everywhere, but there was no colony. Then we started working upwards.

Hammers and chisels began biting into the lovely panelling of our favourite room. With every tearing sound I could see my house coming apart. From one corner of the room we travelled over the french windows and into the other corner. Ants were in our hair, in our clothes, under our feet, everywhere.

Horror in a wall

Then, as one hammer smashed into an upright wall panel, we reached the colony.

It was an awful sight, a huge crawling mess of ants, larvae, stored provisions and excrement, five feet high and eighteen inches across. The ants had burrowed into the deal timbers, emptied them of all their strength to make their galleries, and carried the debris—as we later discovered—twelve feet away to another part of the sun lounge.

As Alec Green estimated later, we had been daily sitting within a few feet of 100,000 hungry, rapacious, highly organized insects.

I stepped back in horror. Green told the photographer: "You've got five seconds to take your pictures. . . ."

Then, armed with a high-pressure spray gun containing insecticide he killed every ant that could be seen. We started prising the nest out and the rotten timbers soon gave way.

First we put pieces of it in small specimen cans. We gave that up and started using buckets. In the end we shovelled the incredible mess out into the garden and burned it.

We soon realized by what fortuitous chance the ants had made their home with us. A cracked pipe in the roof of the sun lounge, invisible from the outside, had let water seep into the deal boards and created just the sort of soaking, rotten, pulpish wood which *Lasius brunneus* delight in.

That night, as Alec Green took off his white coat, he told me: "Mrs. Higgs, you can close the door behind you in peace. The colony is gone. There will be a few ants running loose for a week or so—those that were cut off from the colony when we found it. But they cannot survive without their queen and their home. You'll be all right."

I did just that: closed the door of the sun lounge behind me and my husband and I began thinking about replacing the panelling and getting the room clear of the timber props holding up the roof.

Several weeks later I happened to leave the house by the back door—the farthest point from the sun lounge—when a glint of microscopic movement caught my eye. I looked down.

Across the concrete doorstep, battalions of *Lasius brunneus* were marching back and forth. I remember shutting the door with a bang and sitting down in a chair to think. Then, cautiously, I went through several of the rooms. The ants were back, in the kitchen, the bedrooms and the dining-room.

Alec Green and Joyce Kane returned. They were full of sympathy, but quite convinced that the ants left behind were survivors of the original nest, running madly hither and thither and creating an illusion of numbers. They would eventually die away.

I'm afraid that I wasn't so certain. The nightmare that had been with us for months was back. I dreamed of ants at night and the psychological shock of

once again having them all over the house was too much.

I made up my mind that once and for all the house would belong either to me or the ants.

Alec Green gave me instructions on how to use chlordane—a virulent insecticide—and the spray gun. I arranged that every morning a local workman would arrive at the house with a fourteen-pound hammer and a wedge. I armed myself with a four-pound hammer and a cold chisel and for two months we followed the ants right through the house, smashing, tearing and spraying. They kept coming.

We started on the back door. We hacked through the concrete foundations and started digging a two-foot trench alongside the footings of the house. The ants were there in their thousands.

We propped the walls and went on.

Uprooted a tree

The trail led us right around the outside of the house and one day we saw a nose-to-tail traffic jam of ants leading to a lovely cupressus tree in the garden, not so far away from the fated sun lounge. With a block and tackle, we uprooted the tree to find masses of ants everywhere, mostly in a headlong flight in one direction: back to the house.

We found them going up the outside walls, under the pipes and gutters and into the loft. So we broke into the loft and saw them trickling through plaster walls into my housekeeper's bedroom. We knocked a hole into this room and watched them establishing a right of way into one of the bathrooms.

I became a nervous wreck and I could hardly sleep at night, imagining all kinds of creeping horrors. My husband, who has been a near invalid for some years, could not help me: he is a company director and he had the business to attend to.

From the bathrooms on the first floor we followed the ants along the heating pipes back downstairs into the dining-room. They appeared to make for the fireplace. So we ripped that out. We found them running along underneath the floorboards and into the main lounge. There we had parquet floor. Down went hammers and chisels and we dug a trench a foot across and two feet deep diagonally across the room.

They kept coming and going, coming and going, and disappearing into the boiler house. We lifted the central heating boiler, propped it up on bricks and chipped away at the concrete floor.

I kept thinking of other people to whom this might happen—people who, less fortunate than we were, could not possibly afford the kind of wrecking operation I was engaged on. How could one, in good faith, sell a house overrun by ants?

Every now and then Alec Green visited us and gave us help, information and advice.

He remained convinced that the loss of the colony would eventually make the number of ants dwindle, though he was surprised by the obvious vitality of the survivors.

Several entomologists came to visit us. Eventually, one or two scientific organs began publishing papers about "the case of a private dwelling house in Esher, Surrey."

Lasius brunneus had made us famous—a kind of fame I could have done without.

By early September, every door in the house had been taken away. The trail of destruction led through every floor and every room. Parts of the panelling had been ripped out, door lintels and window sills wrenched off. Some walls rested on piles of bricks. In the kitchen we had taken off the sink unit and all the cupboards and part of the floor. Every wall in the house had a three-inch band of poisonous resin painted on it.

Then, quite suddenly, *Lasius brunneus* gave up the fight. It seemed that the scientists were right, and that the ants had died from lack of a nest and their queen.

Perhaps they were short of food. Possibly the constant disturbance of their patrol ground was too much for them or else the poison had really proved effective. All I know is that one day I realized that I had beaten them.

On September 18, Alec Green and Joyce Kane came back for the last time and we went through the entire house.

There wasn't an ant to be seen.

I was at the end of my strength and my nerves were frayed raw. My husband and I had not been out socially for months. Now, at the onset of winter, we had a cold, empty, half-wrecked house on our hands.

We moved to a flat in London for a few months. Last year we began the rebuilding. Today, the house, our lovely home for so many years, is back to normal.

We have spent well over £5,000 in the process of getting *Lasius brunneus* out of our lives.

My battle with the ants has, I am told, served several useful purposes. For the first time, scientists have established that in certain conditions it could become a domestic pest—and, less than a mile from his laboratory in Slough, Alec Green has discovered another house which has been similarly infested.

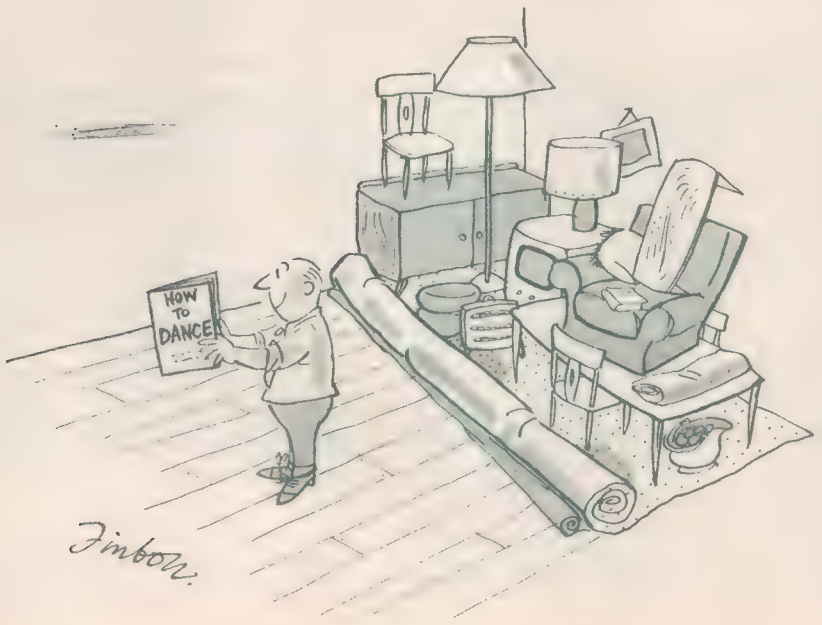
A highly unusual ant, of interest only to entomologists, *Lasius brunneus* has, it seems, come to stay.

But not with us. THE END

DECEIT—1

A certain portion of the human race has certainly a taste for being diddled.

Thomas Hood



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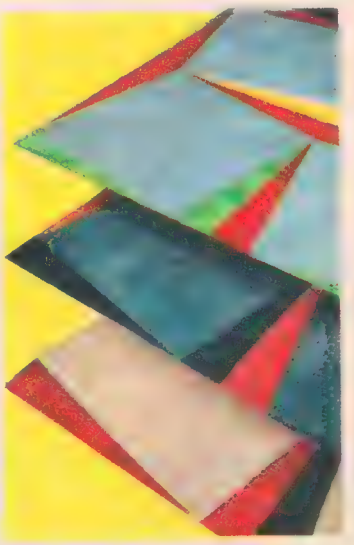

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Spring

Do you make the

Or is it cluttered

gives you no room

spring: planning

This Vanson unit to be used as a room divider or a wall unit. Price about £43. Ercol's easy chairs cost from 13 gns. each. These chairs can be grouped to make a settee or used singly

At this time of year, a kind of reforming frenzy seizes us all. The new spring light opens our eyes to a year's accumulation of grime. While birds are busily engaged building their nests, people are equally busy pulling their homes to pieces, cleaning and purifying every corner and putting them together again.

Spring-cleaning time is the ideal time to take the reforming instinct still further, and indulge in a little analysis and criticism, while your home is in enforced disarray around you. Before you put each piece of the jigsaw back into exactly the same place that it occupied before, ask yourself a few such questions as: "Is everything as it should be in my home?" "Am I quite sure every bit of furniture is pulling its weight?" "Is everything in the best possible place?" "Does the arrangement of my home really suit my way of life?"

A badly arranged room is like a garment that doesn't fit. It may sag in some places and be tight in others, so that it restricts your movements and makes you take up attitudes that don't suit you.

Now there is no fool-proof method of arranging a room. No one arrangement is more "correct" than another, and there are probably two or three equally good arrangements for each of your rooms. Like everything else to do with home-making it is mostly a matter of common sense.

The first step is to make up your mind what each room's use is to be. **The Living-room:** This is a name that embraces sitting-rooms, lounges, drawing-rooms, front rooms and parlours.

In homes where there are no children, or where the occupants are elderly, unsociable or set in their ways, the living-room can be stiff and formal. The furniture, often arranged symmetrically about the centre line of the fireplace, will probably stay in the same place winter and summer, for year after year. In such a room there can be a lot of totally unnecessary furniture—display cabinets, what-nots and little tables bearing bowls of flowers; and there is no harm in this so long as you can still squeeze between the furniture, following well-defined traffic routes. Every horizontal surface can be cluttered with bric-à-brac, each little treasure with its traditional resting place to which it is returned, religiously, after every dusting ceremony; and the more little treasures the better, so long as there's someone who enjoys dusting them. A room like this is as restricting as a straitjacket; but a straitjacket is quite comfortable if one does not move.

On the other hand the homes of young and hospitable people, especially those with children, must be casual, easy-fitting, and made out of material that will stretch. The living-room is used for dozens of different activities —entertaining, sewing, hobbies, homework, indoor games, letter-writing, watching television and just relaxing.

Not only does it have to cater for different uses, but also for different seasons of the year, different days of the week and different hours of the day.

Furthermore, its use changes continually from year to year as the family grows up and the children's hobbies and interests change.

How can one room possibly serve all these purposes? How can it be equally suitable for a game of cards in front of the fire on a cold winter evening, and for a tea party by the french windows on a hot summer afternoon? How can it be a nursery one moment, a study the next and at all times a charming reception room for unexpected visitors?

Obviously no fixed arrangement of furniture will do here. The room must be capable of lightning transformations. It must be possible to shift the focus from the fireplace to the television set or to the window—and to do it quickly, easily and preferably single-handed. It must be as flexible as a contortionist.

... does not have her back to the light

The secret of flexible furnishing is to avoid overcrowding by eliminating superfluous furniture, and to have as much of the furniture as possible mobile, versatile and free from ornamental encumbrances.

Most things can be made mobile by mounting them on castors, but heavy bookcases, writing desks, pianos, dressers, large radiograms, china cabinets and some television sets ought to have fixed positions. Chairs and occasional tables, on the other hand, should be as light and easily movable as possible. Settees and sofas ought to be mobile, too, but some of them are as difficult to shift as the stones of Stonehenge (and probably not much more comfortable to sit on). There is no place in the modern home for those monstrous three-piece suites that were popular twenty-five years ago—vast unwieldy lumps of upholstery occupying twice as much floor space as ordinary easy chairs and mounted on inefficient castors that dig into the carpet, or metal domes that plough grooves in the floor boards. There ARE easy chairs (very comfortable ones, too) light enough for a child to carry about; and I possess an old three-seater sofa made seventy-five years ago that can be pushed from one end of a room to the other (on its original brass castors) as easily as a tea trolley. Whatever the article of furniture there is no virtue in weight or immobility.

The placing of fixed pieces of furniture must be done with great care if they are not to interfere with a room's flexibility. Deciding factors are convenience and daylight. It is well worth while making a plan of each room to scale and moving doll's furniture (as described in February 28 issue) or cut out silhouettes of the actual pieces, about on it.

Desks should stand so that daylight comes over the writer's left shoulder (or the right if he happens to be left handed). Pianos should have the light falling on the keyboard and the music, but it is not important which side it comes from. Bookshelves should be where daylight (but not direct sunlight) falls on the backs of the books. The television set should face away from the windows to avoid reflections. It is much more important, of course, to consider daylight in the summer than in the winter, when a living-room may be used almost exclusively by artificial light. Then these considerations can

by Roger Smithells

turnabout

most of the space in your home? with immovable furniture which to move? Give it a critical look this might make it more comfortable

be ignored, and all one wants is plug points in the right places.

In the old days the living-room was invariably planned with the fireplace as its focal point, mainly because in really cold weather the semi-circle round the fire was the only habitable part of the room. But a room cannot be flexible unless it is possible to keep every corner of it warm; and with

. . . like the stones of Stonehenge

modern methods of draught control, modern fires and portable heating appliances there is really no excuse for a cold and draughty room. The fire is thus becoming less and less important as a point of focus. It is, in fact, giving way to the television set.

Dining-room: There is no need for flexibility in the dining-room or dining-recess, though it is useful to be able to expand the table and fit in extra chairs when entertaining. The position of the table is usually fixed, for it has to be under the light suspended from the ceiling above it. If possible the table should be placed so that no one sitting at it has his back to the window and his shadow on his plate. A rectangular table should have one end pointing at the window, or better still be pushed right up to the window ledge. The sideboard, must, of course, be near the dining-table and as close as possible to the door or hatch through which food comes from the kitchen.

Bedrooms: If used only for sleeping in, a bedroom can be furnished entirely with fixed furniture except for a chair or stool in front of the dressing-table. The bed should, if possible, be placed against an internal wall. It should not be in a position directly opposite the window because, in the event of illness, it is unpleasant to have daylight shining into your eyes. It should not be in a direct line between door and window because of draughts. Often it is placed with its head against a wall, for easy bedmaking, but in a child's room or a bedsitting-room it is much better to fit the bed with castors and place it with its side against a wall, leaving more floor space free.

Built-in furniture, which is liable to cause paralysis in a living-room, can be most useful in a bedroom (especially a bedsitting-room) saving floor space and doing away with awkward fluff-collecting corners.

A dressing-table should be placed where a person sitting at it is seen in the best possible light. A wardrobe, on the other hand, ought to face the window, so that the interior is well lit when the doors are open; but if there is a full-length mirror on the door then it must be in such a position that a person standing in front of it does not have his or her back to the light.

To sum up: remember these points.

1. Make sure each piece of furniture is worth the space it occupies. Pieces which are useless should be ruthlessly eliminated. Space is more valuable than sentiment.

2. Your furniture should be mobile. Fix castors or floor glides to heavy pieces to make manoeuvring easier.

3. Arrange furniture such as desks, pianos, dressing-tables, long mirrors, to catch daylight at the right angle.

4. Place beds so that they are not on a line between door and window.

5. Consider whether the fireplace is still the natural focal point of your living-room or whether your chairs would be better arranged another way.

6. Keep the furniture in scale with the room. Big furniture makes a small room seem smaller still.

Improve proportions

7. If a room is long and narrow, try to concentrate fixed furniture on the end walls, for this will improve the proportions of the available floor space.

8. If a room is square, concentrate fixed furniture along a pair of opposite walls.

9. Another way to improve a long, narrow room is to use a "space-frame" shelf unit, projecting from one of the long walls, to cut off a dining-recess or study corner.

10. Don't let the positions of existing plug points, in bedrooms or living rooms, have too much influence on the placing of furniture. A plug point can always be moved.

11. Don't let a disused fireplace prejudice the comfort of a bedroom. You can always box it in—and use the boxing as a bedhead.

12. Don't arrange your life to suit your home. Arrange your home to suit your way of life.

Nathan's modern bookcase contains, besides glass-protected book-shelves, a useful drop-down writing bureau on the right, and a roomy cupboard on the left. Floor adjusters make it easy to move. In sepia walnut, french walnut, oak or peach mahogany, the bookcase costs £19 11s. 6d.

These three little tables store neatly together when not in use. The small ones are each 15 in. by 15 in. by 15¾ in. high and cost 61s. each. The larger one measures 33¼ in. by 15 in. by 17¾ in. and costs £4 11s. Made by Fyne Ladye

This portable bureau is made of natural elm and beech, and can easily be carried by the two handles at the side. The drawer has a secret lock and movable partitions inside. The bureau is made by Ercol, and costs £10 17s. 6d.

An adaptable tableseat by Fyne Ladye. In mahogany £13 3s., in walnut, £12 10s.

The light "Willow" chair is easy to move about. By Buckingham, £12 19s. 6d.

Part of the Uniflex "M" range of bedroom unit furniture. Two identical chests of drawers support a vanity unit. The mirror flap folds down to form part of the flat top of the unit when out of use. Chests, £16 13s. each, vanity unit, £7 19s.

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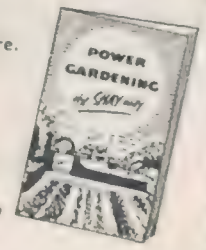

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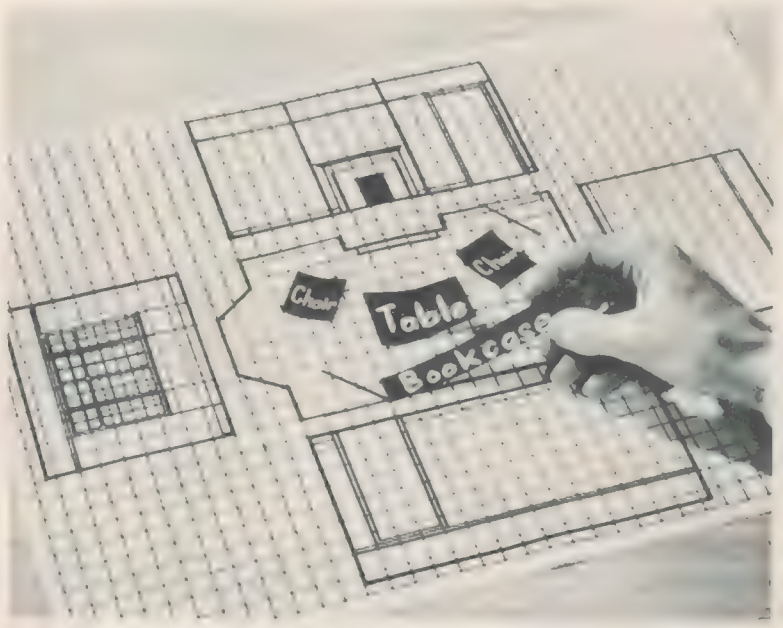
Making a Plan

You don't have to be a draughtsman to make this simple plan. It makes your furniture arrangement easy

says ROGER SMITHELLS



Plot positions for your favourite furniture on the plan

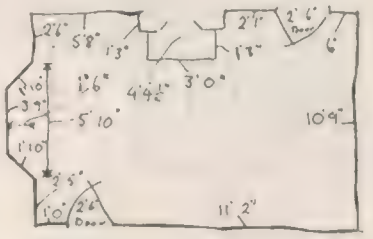
TRYING to visualize a finished scheme of decoration and furnishings before you begin is never easy. A few may be able to manage it in their heads, but for most of us, it is impossible without a plan, on which we can experiment with decorations and furniture arrangement, until we find the ideal scheme.

There are several ways of making such a plan. If you are good at drawing, you can sketch an impression of how you want the room to look, being careful to draw all the furniture and other features to scale. But there is a simpler way which needs no artistic talents. This is to make a ground plan of each room on a large sheet of paper, with the walls "exploded" in elevation round it. On this "map," you can mark positions of furniture, pictures and knick-knacks, and also pin samples of carpet, curtains, wallpaper, etc., in their destined places.

The best way to set about drawing a plan to scale is first to make a very rough freehand sketch of the floor plan. Then go round the room with a measuring tape, and make a note of each measurement on your rough plan. This will look something like the scribble on the right.

Next, buy a large sheet of graph paper marked in inch squares, and re-draw your plan to scale — one inch to a foot—starting with the longest straight wall. It does not matter too much about accuracy, so long as you are within six inches—half an inch on the plan. Mark the position of doors, showing which way they open, windows, fireplaces, lighting points and brackets, and anything else likely to affect your scheme.

Now add elevational plans of the walls on each side, as shown in the plan on this page. Again you should mark any distinguishing features, such as picture rails, fireplaces, doors and windows.



Sketch your plan roughly, then add the measurements

Finally, using the same scale, cut out small pieces of cardboard to represent the furniture you plan to have in the room—seen from above. Armed with these, and snippets of your chosen wallpapers and fabrics, and a box of watercolours to use for paintwork, you can start to make your scheme. Colour the floor first, then pin up samples for the curtains. Lastly, choose wall colours.

ROGER SMITHELLS WILL HELP YOU

with your home-making problems. Write to him at "John Bull and Everybody's Weekly," 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1, enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope for reply. Please send a rough drawing or diagram if this will help to make your problem clear

My heart and I

continued from page 13

with Cochran regarding the production of *Paganini* with Evelyn Laye. It is an open secret that Cocky had originally had Gracie Fields in mind to play opposite Richard, but I don't think Gracie or anyone else could have prevented what happened to *Paganini*.

Dear Evelyn; she loved Richard and they had a deep understanding and respect for each other. "What a tremendous child he is," she used to say. "He cares only for applause and the effect of his singing on his audiences—earning a lot of money is secondary."

Soon after *Pagliacci* was finished, at the end of 1936, we were off to Egypt on a tour of Lehar's operettas which had been planned for some time. Our contract in the land of the Pharaohs was an exhausting one, with twenty-eight performances in Cairo and seven in Alexandria.

Before we left Egypt there was a large party given in Richard's honour by a rich and influential maharajah; I was presented with a beautiful diamond brooch and drank far too much. I awakened very worried the next morning, knowing Richard's views on the subject of drink. I crept into the sitting-room which adjoined our suite in the Semiramis Hotel and found Richard composing at the piano. He heard me come in, but did not jump to his feet with his usual cheerful greeting. Instead, he turned his head and looked at me with a reproachful expression.

I put my arms round his shoulders. "Darling, I'm so sorry. Did I behave badly last night?"

"No, you did not," he replied. "You sat in a chair and slept all through the speeches. When they were over you stood up very carefully, without saying goodbye, and said: 'Richard, shall we go back to Elstree?' I put you in the car and we came home. But your companion, Thea, is most upset."

The greatest tragedy

"Thea upset?" I said. "Why should she be?"

"Because you carefully put your artificial flowers in water before you went to bed."

I started to laugh, but Richard stopped me severely: "There is one thing I do not find funny, and that is drink. I have told you many times that I hate to see anyone, especially a woman, under the influence of alcohol. I think it's the greatest tragedy in life. If you want to make me happy, please, I beg you, don't drink."

All the time we were away from England, telegrams, letters and contracts passed between Richard and London regarding C. B. Cochran's production of Lehar's *Paganini*.

On May 20, 1937, the curtain went up at the Lyceum Theatre on Cochran's spectacular production. I was in a box with several of my friends and feeling terribly nervous. "Boo" Laye excelled herself and I could feel how Richard was bringing out all that was best in her lovely voice. The ballet was quite perfect. A. P. Herbert's adaptation delicious and the décor beautiful.

Among the distinguished audience at a gala performance Queen Mary sat regally, smiling in her box. "Her Majesty is a great admirer of Richard's," Cocky told me. The succession of curtain calls, the speeches, the deafening applause—all these things helped to convince us that Cochran had a winner. With a light heart he left for America.

First opera film

Meanwhile, the world première of our last film, *Pagliacci*, was presented with a big publicity drive. The film had been awaited with much interest, as it was the first serious attempt to film opera with sound and orchestra, applying film technique that was not possible on the live stage and, in some scenes, a new colour technique.

But Richard had been depressed with the whole idea of a film opera; and the finished result was not a big success, as he had feared.

It was an exciting year for me; I entertained a great deal in a house we had rented in Culross Street, while Richard sang at the theatre.

I am never likely to forget the first really big ball I gave because, on this occasion, I made a worse blunder than usual. I borrowed a large house in Curzon Street and decorated it like a beer-garden. I asked everyone I knew and, as it happened, some I didn't.

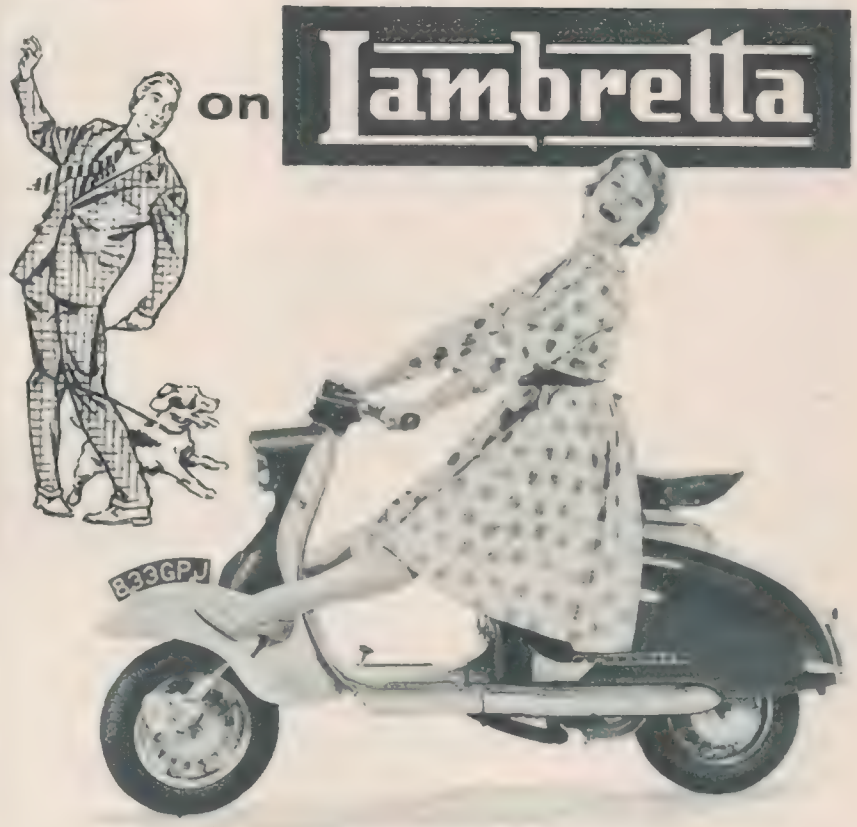
Hoping to find some of Richard's Continental friends, I searched his much-thumbed telephone and address book and discovered the name of an Austrian baroness. Fine, I chuckled to myself; this must be an old friend; I'll make it a big surprise for Richard and ask her.

I rang her and, speaking in my best German, asked if she would like to come to a dance I was giving and bring a party. "But, of course, Frau Tauber. How nice of you!" she cooed down the telephone.

Francis Queensberry and Adrian Baillie acted as the hosts on the great night, as Richard would be coming on later with Evelyn Laye and other members of the cast of *Paganini*. I stood beside them and received my guests at the top of a big curving staircase.

Among the crowd arriving, I saw a woman and five beautiful girls. I was very surprised, as I did not know their

You'll look a picture on Lambretta



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GET AROUND BETTER—TRAVEL Lambretta

Smee's L40

My heart and I

continued from previous page

names or recognize them at all. Their hair was just a little too blonde and their necklines were a shade too low, their jewellery too big and bright and make-up quite definitely overdone.

"I am Richard's friend," explained the fat old girl. She smiled, displaying rather yellow teeth. I shot an agonized look at Francis, who was very amused; I mumbled something politely and turned to talk to another guest.

"And where did you find *them*?" asked Eleanor Smith, Lord Birkenhead's daughter and a good friend of mine.

I suddenly remembered. "In Richard's telephone book," I said faintly.

She rocked with laughter. "I can't wait to see his face."

I was not amused and said so, but Eleanor still went on laughing.

Richard bustled in with a beaming smile and an embrace for me. Suddenly he saw the small group of women seated at a table by themselves. "Diana!" he thundered. "Did *you* ask these people?"

"Yes," I said in a small voice. "I wanted to surprise you."

"*Surprise* me!" I could see he was really very angry, and noticed that after a short time madam and her young ladies had vanished.

Never lived down

I decided there and then that his telephone book must be speedily destroyed—and it was! This story made club news for many months afterwards and, even today, if I give a party, I am inevitably asked: "From which book do you get the names of your guests?"

That night, when we returned to our house in Culross Street, I said: "I only wanted you to have your Continental friends at the party."

He gave a grunt and promptly went to sleep.

Despite the audience's enthusiasm at the first night, *Paganini* was drawing bad houses. The box office showed a slow decline. Richard was in despair, playing miserable music at home every day. He had not even the heart to go to one of his beloved cinemas. Then, out of the blue, Cochran cabled from America: CLOSE THE SHOW.

Richard generously offered to meet the difference between profit and loss, but despite all the publicity given to this gesture, the show nevertheless had to come off.

We were scheduled for a series of concerts in the States in October.

The most exciting part of the tour for me was our visit to Hollywood. I marvelled at the luxury trains; and the comfort of the drawing-room, showers, washbasins, iced water, beds and beautifully appointed fittings made the three-day journey a paradise.

The rest and the break from music undoubtedly did Richard good, because he sang magnificently to a packed house at his first concert in Los Angeles. His old friends from Germany and Austria inundated us with invitations: Ernst Lubitsch, the famous director who was once a comedian, and, of course, Marlene Dietrich—she was the first to welcome Richard with outstretched arms and a warm, affectionate greeting for me.

We dined with Benita and Ronnie Colman; Charles Boyer and his pretty English wife, Pat Paterson; and Edward G. Robinson, who showed us his wonderful collection of old masters and modern paintings, and first editions.

One afternoon William Powell and Edward G. Robinson decided, for reasons best known to themselves, to ride a bicycle with Richard on the handlebars. I turned the ciné camera to catch this for our film library. They looked supremely funny on the bicycle and even more so when they all crashed heavily to the ground, laughing like schoolboys. Unfortunately, I had forgotten to put a film in.

The climax of our short stay in Hollywood came with the party which the Rathbones gave for us. We arrived at their lovely house to be met with flowers: there were white flowers literally wherever we looked and their scent was intoxicating.

At least two hundred people were crowded into a large marquee which had been put up in the garden. When Richard began to sing, Marlene draped herself over the grand piano and listened as if she had never heard him before.

Constance Bennett brought *sixteen* guests, and among others I saw Norma Shearer with David Niven.

The music went on until the early hours of the morning. From time to time the orchestra leader wandered among the guests, playing some of Richard's well-known songs, and Richard could not resist jumping up and singing. Back in our hotel, we dropped exhausted on our beds.

"I was so happy tonight," said Richard. "It is an evening I shall never forget. They understand artists because they are artists themselves. They talked, I listen; I talk, they listen; I feel as they feel. They are my kind of people."

These few weeks in Hollywood would have been a most cherished memory if I had not spoilt everything by making a terrible scene the day before we were due to leave for New York: a stupid scene that was to cause Richard great pain and misery.

The secret telephone calls Richard liked to make still irritated me, but in the novelty of meeting everyone in Hollywood I had not had the time to make my usual mountain out of a molehill. Then one morning I opened his door and heard him sending a cable.

As the door opened, he quickly replaced the receiver. "Richard, what are you doing?" I demanded.

He smiled benignly. "Sending a cable to Harold Holt."

He was always a bad liar, and with a sudden surge of jealousy. I knew that he was cabling Mary Losseff, an actress with whom he had once fallen in love but who had refused to marry him. I picked up the receiver and asked the operator to read back the message. Richard glared at me, picked up his camera and marched out of the hotel.

He had cabled: "MARY, SWEET, EVERY HOUR BRINGS ME NEARER TO YOU. YOUR RICHARD."

I listened in horrified silence: no, this was *too* much. I'll leave him, I thought desperately. I'll go away today.

I packed my clothes, ordered a car, booked a ticket and went back to New York one day early. The telephone messages en route and the flowers that appeared from Richard at every station did nothing to appease me; I was burning with fury and jealousy.

(Had I not been so impetuous, I would have shared an experience that Richard often recalled with pleasure. As Richard's train was moving out of Los Angeles, Marlene Dietrich hobbled in her tight skirt along the platform and, as a parting gift, thrust through the window a cake which she had specially baked for him.)

A few days later Richard followed me into our New York hotel, armed with a pathetic expression and a large bouquet. I would not speak to him and locked myself in my bedroom. He hammered repeatedly on the door, but I refused to let him in. I cried until my eyes were so red that I could not have shown myself in public for days.

He knocked even louder on the door and pleaded: "Diana, please listen. I must talk to you. . . ."

"Go away!" I sobbed. "GO AWAY!"

"But you must listen. We have an invitation to the White House. I'm going to sing for President Roosevelt. Please be sensible; Mary means nothing to me. It's just a deep friendship."

Deep friendship! I muttered into my pillow; it was useless Richard trying to persuade me. I refused to leave New York, and missed the honour of dining at the White House and meeting the President and first lady of America.

As usual, I had made a fuss about nothing. Richard's friendship with Mary was, in fact, exactly as he had described it. If only I had tried to understand him better and let him have his little secrets. They hurt no one—least of all me at that time.

"You need lots of women, Richard," I said. "One for every mood."

"No," he contradicted me with a grin. "One for every note of the piano." On the strength of this flippant remark we kissed and made up, but I knew that the scene had upset Richard very deeply and he never really forgave me.

When our boat, the Queen Mary, docked at Cherbourg, Richard left to continue his journey to Vienna, while I went to England to see my family. His beloved opera season was about to begin. I telephoned him from London, saying that I wanted to spend a few days in Switzerland. It may have been my imagination, but I thought he seemed rather relieved. He was as affectionate as ever on the telephone and the cables he later sent were full of love and warmth, but for all that a shadow had fallen across our marriage and it was all my fault.

I left Switzerland early in February, 1938, to join my mother in the south of France. Richard, meanwhile, was to fulfil a contract which had been signed for some time. A Viennese cast, headed by himself, was to tour Italy with a programme of operettas; chief of these being *Lilac Time* and *Land Of Smiles*. The opening night scheduled for an early date in March.

I was sun-bathing by the pool at Eden Roc when I was called to the telephone. It was Richard, in Milan. His voice was barely a whisper.

"I'm going to Vienna," he croaked. "I must see my own doctor; I have a terribly sore throat, and the whole tour depends on me. We have had to cancel the opening. I leave tonight."

Germans massing

"But is that wise?" I asked. "Surely there are plenty of good doctors in Milan." Nervously I read the headlines over to him. "German troops mass on Austrian frontier. . . . Hitler Youth in streets of Vienna."

I knew he was getting angry, but I still tried to reason with him. Impatiently he rang off. I did some rapid thinking and then telephoned Randolph Churchill in London.

"Richard wants to go to Vienna on the night train from Italy and I'm sure he shouldn't go. Have you any idea what's happening there?"

Randolph, I felt certain, knew a great deal about the political situation in Vienna. "I think it would be extremely inadvisable," he said briskly.

I immediately telephoned back to Richard. "You *must* listen to me; please don't go." He refused to listen.

I did not hesitate; collecting my sports car, I drove dangerously fast along the winding roads, keeping my foot hard down on the accelerator all the way. When I stopped briefly for a cup of coffee the headlines in the Italian

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DECEIT—2

It is not being deceived, but undeceived, which renders us miserable.

Sophie Arnould

The Inspector's comment *See page 18*

There's something funny about that glass of milk. The steward said that when he found it "full and untouched" he knew something was wrong. Something was. According to the doctor the ship had rolled heavily at 3 a.m. —heavily enough to throw several passengers out of bed. Why hadn't it upset the milk? Because, it seems to me, it can't have been there. My guess is that the steward was having an affair with Miss Porter and that, overcome by jealousy at hearing her with another man, he went back and murdered her. It must have occurred to him during the night that he needed an alibi, and the glass on the ledge—indicating that he'd never been in the cabin—must have seemed a good one. So he went and put it there—forgetting the ship had rolled meanwhile.

newspapers urged me on even faster. I *must* stop him, I *must* be in time, I prayed.

Red-eyed, dirty and completely exhausted, I almost fell into the hotel where Richard was staying, exactly an hour before his train was due to leave for Vienna. His suitcase was packed and he was actually in the foyer paying his bill when I staggered in.

He was amazed and furious when he saw me—furious at what he called my "nonsense"—and stormed up to his sitting-room.

I begged, entreated and finally cried. "*Please*, Richard," I pleaded, "wait one more day—just to please me." I reminded him of the warning we had received from the man in Munich in 1935.

"Really," he said angrily, "you're making a lot of fuss about nothing. But, just to please you, I will wait overnight. Tomorrow I go; Hitler in Vienna!" he kept muttering. "Why, it's impossible!"

I woke up early the next morning, and for a moment did not realize where I was; it almost seemed that my frantic drive of the day before had been some nightmare. Suddenly, I was wide awake: I walked across the sitting-room of the suite and looked into Richard's bedroom; he was not there. I went to the bathroom and listened outside the door; there was silence, except for the noise of a tap running.

Nazis take Vienna

I opened the door and saw Richard being shaved by the hotel barber. He made no sign of recognition; I saw a dead white face, rendered all the more horrifying by the shaving soap which half covered the lower part.

The barber went on with his job and I waited patiently, knowing that something terrible had happened to Richard. He stood up and brushed past me. Picking up a paper, he handed it to me. In large black letters the cruel headlines announced: "German Reich Annexes Austria. . . . Hitler's Armies Occupy Vienna. . . ."

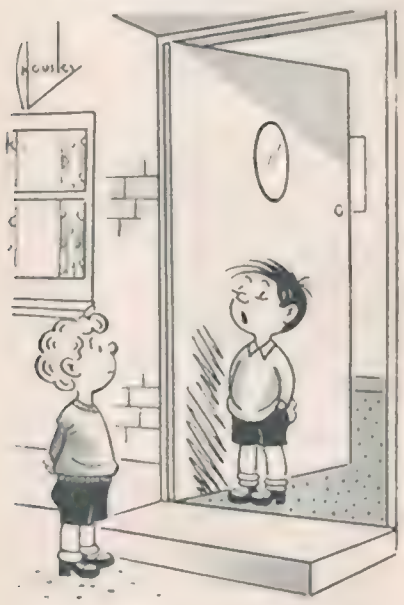
He looked suddenly old and his shoulders were bent. He walked past me to the sitting-room without a word, and played idly on his piano.

He went on playing his piano for three solid days and during the whole time did not utter a word, but sat hunched over the keys, drinking coffee and munching apples when I put them beside him. His father said he would be better left alone, as he was terribly shocked and I wandered miserably about the hotel, thanking God that Richard was in Italy and not in Vienna.

Presently, looking wan and grief-stricken, he came in search of me. "Come. Life must go on," he said shortly.

The days of silence had cured his red and inflamed chords without the aid of

continued on page 32



"It wasn't as bad as all that, being ill. I made lots of money taking nasty medicine"

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My heart and I

continued from previous page

any doctor. I decided to follow his Papa's advice and leave him to continue his tour alone, and with a heavy heart I drove back to the south of France.

After the performances in Florence and Naples and other towns, I gradually sensed from Richard's telephone calls that renewed interest in his work was helping him to carry on. I joined him in Rome at the end of the tour, but was shocked by his appearance. The bounding, optimistic, lovable spirit seemed broken. He would sit for hours at his piano and the music he played was heartrending.

Certainty of war

We sailed for South Africa on August 17, 1939. The voyage was quiet and peaceful, although the war news became increasingly alarming. Richard would not even read the papers or listen to the radio. One evening I remarked: "I'm certain there will be a war now, but he simply won't face up to it."

We were met at Cape Town by members of the South African Consolidated Theatres and entertained to a sumptuous lunch before booking into our hotels. I was reading the paper in the Mount Nelson Hotel when I heard that Poland had been invaded and that England and France had declared war on Germany. Looking at the hazy blue of the sky, the purple, shadowy vineyards in the distance, and Table Mountain hovering above us, it hardly seemed possible.

We had only one of the special "Nansen" passports issued to stateless people and travel documents which were not valid in time of war. I immediately put through a call to London, asking for Colonel (now Brigadier Sir) George Harvie-Watt.

He promised to do what he could, but in the meantime advised us to go to Switzerland and there wait for our papers from the Home Office. I still had to force myself to believe, in this enchanted atmosphere, that war had really started.

There were, however, certain incidents in South Africa that did not make me over-anxious to stay in that land of sunshine and plenty. I had noticed a big change since our previous visit.

Apart from the successful tour of *Land of Smiles*, several other concerts had been booked, and at one, where Richard was appearing in his favourite dual rôle of singer and conductor, he was asked not to conduct the playing of "God Save The King." With a face of thunder, he marched firmly on to the stage. Tapping his baton, he said: "Must I, an Austrian, tell you stand up for your King?"

There were ominous mutterings among some of the audience, but the National Anthem was played. Afterwards, we had bottles and rotten fruit thrown at our car as we drove back to the hotel.

Richard decided that he could not face the long sea voyage back to Europe; he was far too restless and nervous. We would have had to leave the ship at Madeira and find our own way to Switzerland, so we decided to fly.

With sorrow we said goodbye to the rest of the cast and booked tickets to Rome on one of the big Empire "Class C" flying-boats.

Very soon after landing in Italy our visas arrived and we were able to fly on to Zürich. After the long months of travel, it was wonderful to relax, if only for a short time, at the Baur au Lac—a hotel we both loved. The cool breezes of Lake Zürich blew in our faces as we sipped coffee and, even in winter, it was possible to sit out on the terraces.

But Richard was lost in one of his blackest moods, and nothing I could say or do cheered him up. He played for hours on his piano, not uttering a word, and even his quick, whimsical humour had deserted him.

His world had fallen about his ears. I had to rally him, somehow.

© *Diana Napier Tauber, 1959*

NEXT WEEK: Richard is ill, and sings for the last time

BE A BETTER DRIVER

Talk yourself to safety

PEOPLE who talk to themselves are apt to be regarded with suspicion. However, there is an occasion when the habit can be turned to advantage—when driving a car.

Try it the next time you are at the wheel for a lengthy journey. Speak your thoughts, giving a running commentary on all that is happening or likely to happen, and what you intend to do about it.

Commentary driving, as it is called, is a pleasant way of relieving the boredom of long trips. More important, it is a first-class method of improving even an experienced driver's powers of observation and anticipation. It is taught to all police drivers, and is used in tests conducted by the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

Easy with practice

Some drivers who try "thinking aloud" get tongue-tied at first, and drive too slowly; others talk and drive too quickly. But an easy flow of words, to describe your driving at normal speeds, comes with practice.

This is the sort of thing you will hear yourself saying once the initial self-consciousness has been overcome: "Child on cycle ahead, riding no hands. Check the mirror in case somebody has come up quickly on my tail. Warn the child of my approach and allow enough room when overtaking."

The secret of successful commentary driving is to keep looking well ahead so as to have time in which to mention the important points that affect safety. Also, of course, you mustn't be long-winded in your commentary, or you will miss too much.

Countless observations can be made. Watch out for, and talk about, situations such as traffic lights that are changing from amber to red; pedestrians about to step hesitantly on to a crossing; pedestrians with their backs towards you who might step off the pavement into your path; drivers whose positions on the road sometimes give a clue to their unsignalled intentions, and other hazards such as roundabouts, narrow bridges, crossroads and junctions.

The commentary for a busy road sounds something like this: "Bus at bus stop on other side of the road ahead. Watch out for passengers alighting and crossing road. Check mirror. A car's on my tail. Give slowing-down signal. Brake gently. Pass bus and accelerate.

"Pedestrian-crossing ahead. Nobody on it, but be prepared for someone to make a sudden appearance. Check mirror. No traffic behind. Brake gently. Negotiate crossing. Car at kerb. Driver looks as though he will open door. Check mirror. Nobody behind. Brake gently. Use horn. Give wide berth and accelerate."

In open country, the commentary is often more to do with the road than traffic problems.

Compiled in co-operation with the Institute of Advanced Motorists. A non-profit-making organization, its object is to improve the standard of driving and also the promotion of road safety. The address of the Institute is 21 Harrington Road, London, S.W.7.

The uneasy heads

continued from page 19

in faraway Brazil, Magda Lupescu, on her deathbed with an incurable ailment, was finally united in marriage to King Carol, her joy being so great that she recovered almost immediately.

Invitations went out to all of Elizabeth's and Philip's royal cousins, and in they poured—the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs, the Orange-Nassaus and the Bernadottes, the Saxe-Coburg-Gothas and the Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg - Glucksburgs. Also the Bourbon-Parmas, among them a pretty princess, Anne of Bourbon-Parma, who lived in Switzerland. From Bucharest in his private plane came the Iron Curtain King, Michael I of Rumania, attracting, in some ways, the most curious glances of all.

What, the others wondered, do two and a half years of Communism do to a king?

Michael, they noticed, looked pale and strained. He was simply uniformed, unsmiling and reserved. One could see he had been through a severe strain. King Peter of Yugoslavia buttonholed him.

"Look here, Michael," he said. "You will either be killed or moved out very soon by the Russians. Why don't you take your chance and stay here?"

Michael said something non-committal about having to clear up a mess, and changed the subject. As his holiday progressed his gloom lightened. Princess Anne was a girl of spirit. She had arrived penniless in New York during the war when her parents, Prince René of Bourbon-Parma and Princess Margrethe of Denmark, escaped from occupied Copenhagen, and she had earned her living as a salesgirl. Returning to Europe, she enlisted as an ambulance driver in the French Army, seeing action in Casablanca, Algiers and Italy, and following the advance of General de Lattre's advancing troops as far as Stuttgart. For her services she had been awarded a *Croix de Guerre*.

She was the very image of graciousness for which Michael had been starved.

The Western press, which speculated on whether Michael would return to Rumania at all, under-estimated the strength of Michael's character. But from Rumania there seemed to be a brooding silence difficult to define but which boded no good for the King.

DECEIT—3

No man was ever so much deceived by another as by himself.

Lord Greville

On his return Michael asked Groza formally for permission to marry, but was met with an ominous hedging. Christmas passed and there was no word from the Government.

The word was on the way, however. The date for the fall of the final curtain was December 30, 1947, but the stage was set the evening before.

At 8.30 p.m., while the King and his mother, Queen Helen, were at dinner, Petru Groza summoned him to the capital the following morning "on important business."

Next morning the royal car with King Michael at the wheel, Queen Helen by his side, and the King's equerry and duty ADC behind, drove into Bucharest. Immediately Communist officers closed in on them, separating the King and his mother from their suites. Michael saw that the guards at the doors were strange and unfamiliar to him.

Over the past two and a half years Michael had grown accustomed to Groza and almost liked him. What made him grow tense was the sight of another minister, Georghiu-Dej, Secretary-General of the Communist Party. Georghiu-Dej could have no interest one way or another in whether Michael married Anne of Bourbon-Parma.

In spite of all the crises through which they had gone, Michael and his mother were utterly taken aback when Groza handed over to him a parchment containing a declaration of abdication. The solemn blue eyes of the King looked up at the two men in front of him.

"If I refuse to sign this," he said, "you cannot force me."

"No," Groza admitted. "But I warn you, sire, that guns are trained on the city. Blood will flow. Thousands of your supporters will be arrested. Rumania will enter a period of horrible suffering and those who love you now will hate you for it."

"Can I have time to think it over?" Michael asked quietly.

He was given twenty minutes. Michael and Helen argued but it was useless. Michael signed. A passport was handed to him. His citizenship, he was told, was not to be taken away from him. For what it was worth, he would still be permitted to travel on a Rumanian passport.

The long argument over abdication threw up one dramatic moment, and a testimony to the King as vivid as it was indirect. When it was all over and the document signed, Groza lifted the flap of his side pocket and showed Michael and Queen Helen that he was carrying a gun. The Communist leader giggled at the Queen's alarm.

"I was taking no chances," he said.

As the cold year of 1947 turned into the no less chilly year of 1948, Michael left his country by train, for the freedom and exile of Switzerland where Anne of Bourbon-Parma was waiting. He was sunk in gloom and consumed with a sense of failure which did him credit. He blamed only himself, not Groza, not Ana Pauker, not even his father who had brought such ruin upon him.

Only madness

It was all over. He was only twenty-six, yet the period from the beginning to the end of his reign was not much shorter than that of George V of England. And in that period he could honestly say he had never known a single day of sane, normal, constitutional rule. Nothing but madness.

Customs formalities at the frontier were perfunctory. Rumania was left behind to its fate. Ana Pauker later sank into disfavour and on last reports was working obscurely in a Rumanian publishing house.

Groza died of cancer in 1958, aged seventy-five. By that time other Communists still more anonymous had taken their places.

There were constitutional difficulties against the Orthodox Michael marrying the Catholic Anne, but no one was inclined to test the patience of the ex-King who had endured so much, and they were married in Athens in 1948. They lived for a while in a small house in Lausanne where their two children

were born, and in 1953 they moved to Ayot St. Lawrence, where Bernard Shaw had lived.

Michael had established many records during his reign, records not likely to be equalled. As an English gentleman farmer he had a new, melancholy record to his name. Of all the kings in exile he was the poorest, poorer even than Peter of Yugoslavia.

Whatever money existed in the family was possessed by Carol, and this infuriated Michael. When Carol visited London he sent messages to Michael, but Michael ignored him. Carol had set himself up in Portugal where he and the new Princess Elena Lupescu were shunned by all the other exiles except the good-natured Umberto of Italy.

While Michael made a meagre living farming, Carol's other son, Mircea, and his former wife Zizi Lambrino, were reduced to penury. Mircea in 1945 had managed to pay his way to Brazil for an audience with his father and was told: "His Majesty knows no one by the name of Lambrino."

Death of Carol

In April, 1953, Carol died, and many princes came to pay their respects to one of the worst, but certainly not one of the least, of their ilk.

Carol had had his day of power, which is more than can be said for all. Michael sent a chilly word from England that his wife had just had a baby and could not come. Prince Nicholas, his brother, was the sole family representative.

"I hated Carol more than I ever hated anybody in my life," he said, "but he was my brother and my King."

After the funeral, Magda Lupescu, grievously mourning, holed herself up with her memories and King Carol's fortune.

The various free Rumanian national committees scattered throughout the free world are mostly monarchist and loyal to Michael. In spite of his lack of formality, Michael likes to be recognized as King, and he maintains an equerry, General Petre-Lazar, in London.

Michael has had a succession of jobs, including one as director of a Swiss branch of a California aeronautical instrument firm. He is in poor circumstances, but he has turned down an offer of $100,000 from an American magazine to write his memoirs.

Money apart, he is happy where he is and how he is. He likes to shoot and to spend his time with his family. Mention Rumania or King or royal family to him and a curtain falls on his good humour. He rarely discusses the past.

Among his royal cousins he is not popular, consequently many people were surprised when he accepted an invitation to go on one of Queen Frederika's royal cruises.

"What on earth are you doing here?" he was asked by one cousin.

"I like some royalty," he replied. "But not many and not much."

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NEXT WEEK: Otto, the patient prince who dreams of power

Answers to
Everybody's Puzzling

FRED BORDERS'S BRAIN TEASER

Leaving out the 3 hours, it will be 5 times as many minutes to 1 p.m. So we must divide 1 hour by (1 + 5). Hence it is 10 minutes past noon, and in 3 hours' time it will be 50 minutes to 4 p.m.

QUIZZLE

The quotation: Man wants but little here below nor wants that little long.—*Goldsmith*

Clue Down: Oh dear, what can the matter be.

Clues Across: (A) Omega; (B) Hankow; (C) Dragon; (D) Entrails; (E) Albumen; (F) Ritual; (G) Whippet; (H) Hitler; (I) Aesthetic; (J) Termite; (K) Carbine; (L) Alto; (M) Newnham; (N) Tussore; (O) Highwayman; (P) Enterprise; (Q) Myth; (R) Archaic; (S) Throttle; (T) Trivet; (U) Ethyl; (V) Rowel; (W) Boomerang; (X) Elegy.

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Earthshaker

continued from page 22

regular cave in there; the river in its violent explosion into this little channel had sought out the weakened place and torn it fiercely away, clod by clod, uncovering the creamy tusks and sliding them out into the full surge to tumble along northward. But it couldn't have destroyed that face of stacked rock, the iron boxes must still be there, beyond its reach.

Decker inhaled and shut his eyes and went down once more, moving into the hole with shuffling thrusts of his bare feet. The side of the cavern hid him now from the main current.

Edging gradually farther forward he found the rear face. His lungs were burning and his head roared.

He backed away, and burst into the clean rainy air just as his strength was draining away entirely. But he knew now what he was going to do.

Battling the constant rush and tear of the flood, he forced his way to a position from which he could reach the roof of the cavity with his spade. Leaning against the current, he began to hack with powerful overhand strokes at the edge of the roof, which, being saturated and crumbling, broke away before his blade in huge chunks.

About three feet of solid bank remained above the hole; the foot below that was what he was cutting through. The clods fell into the water with thick plopping noises. He moved into the cave slowly, driving his toes hard into muck and gnarled roots for purchase.

Once a quantity of floating grass came whirling down upon him, clinging to his shoulders and arms like a living beast. As he tugged it loose he realized that his hands were so cold he would not be able to hold the spade much longer. He increased the speed of his blows, carving out the ceiling.

Finally he thought he had cleared enough. Now he had to get out of the water and restore his circulation.

CLAWING his way downstream, he reached a slant which he thought he could climb. He lay gasping and coughing, shuddering with chill and reaction; was there really a reason for doing this so impressive that he had to risk a vile death in its name? Was he that damned greedy?

He shoved himself up and began flexing his hands, then his arms and legs, and at last he could stand and even trot about in a little circle, warming himself in the bleak rain. *Sure there's a reason. You started it, that's why.*

When he could feel the warmed blood pumping in his body, he groped along through the blackness to his pile of clothing and lowered himself again into the rushing water.

Now, with a foot of air space between the bubbling stream and the dirt roof, he could crouch in the hole itself and dig at the rear wall. Shortly his blade struck rock with a dull clink. Beginning about waist-high, he prised the stones out until he had undercut a substantial part of the masonry. It dropped with a tremendous splash.

When he calculated that all the rocks had fallen which were going to fall, and the roof had not collapsed, he went in again and poked his spade hopefully at the wall. Earth; here a rock; and by God! if that wasn't metal he was a Dutchman!

He let his spade fall; it wasn't needed now. Raising his head above the surface, he breathed deeply, feeling at his throat for the two keys on their rawhide string. He couldn't untie the knot. He snapped the cord and slid the keys off it.

The river pushed at him ferociously. Holding one key in each hand, he submerged and cumbersomely attempted to fit one of them into the lock of the safe. It was the wrong one. He tried the second. The key turned; he clutched eagerly at the handle to pull the door open, and stopped.

WHAT would the current do when that door swung out? Could it snatch the diamonds and float them away? That didn't seem possible. But it might overturn the cans.

As he stood there considering, automatically fighting the eddies and surges of the stream which sought to drag him away from his cubbyhole, it dawned on him that the water was surging at the base of his neck. It had risen, and very swiftly too.

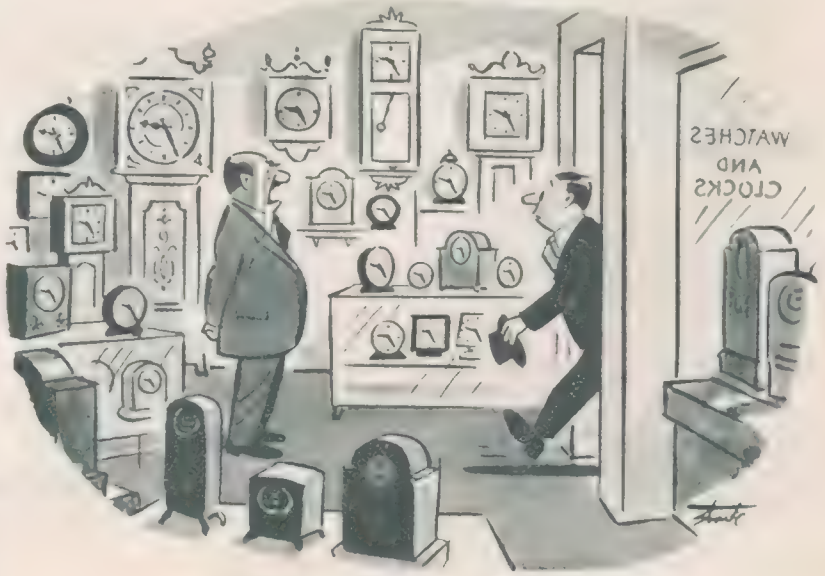
He went down dangerously fast and found the door and dragged it forward. Feeling inside, dropping the two keys, he touched sacks—Rhodes's sovereigns, not worth the trouble—and a single large tin with a jagged edge.

Clutching the can to his chest, he shot up to the surface and gulped air, a trickle of filthy water passing down his throat so that he spluttered and coughed wrenchingly. Slowly he turned and began to force his way out.

The enormous pressure of the main current smashed him like an avalanche of sand. He spun round and lost his footing, was whirled sickeningly end over end, snatched for safety, for life, broke water and gulped and was under again, wishing he'd learned to swim, and was hurled against the bank with a shock that seemed to break half his bones. The can of diamonds was gone.

Only a little short of actual madness, he struggled upstream, raving aloud at the swelling tide. He came to the hole and got in, slid underwater and felt his way to the open safe.

There was nothing in it but the sacks of coins, yet he'd dropped the keys in there too. They couldn't have been



"You see what time it is, Lawson?"

"Let's see how he looks over there"

washed out. There must be justice in this world.

He found one. Without waiting to test it in the lock he pawed along the crumbly wall to the second iron box. A couple of rocks remained in front of its lower part; he tore them away viciously. The key, which he held gripped tight between thumb and forefinger stabbed for the lock. It was the right key.

Decker emitted a bubble of air, which on land would have been a yelp of delight. The heavy door came towards him. He felt a pair of dented cans.

This time, no matter if the river rose and flowed over its banks, he would save some of the loot. He dug both hands into a tin and grasped two brimming fistfuls of the rough jewels. When he endeavoured to put them into his pockets, he discovered that his pants were so sodden, so pasted to his thighs by the whirling flood, that he could not wedge a finger into them.

God, God, God, he thought, *what now?*

In the extremity of desperation he wiggled his way upright and sighed in the wet air, then brought one hand to his mouth and pushed the diamonds one by one between his blue, quivering lips, some of them into the pouches of his cheeks, others past his chattering teeth to lie below his tongue and in the angles of his jaws. The left handful he clenched hard.

He began to pull a breath through his nose, the water in the nostrils burning like lit oil as it was drawn inward. Over the splashing and the vibrant boom of the river he heard a sound like thunder. For an instant he believed it to be the storm. Then he recognized that it was very close to him. Pieces of earth fell on his head. A thick sudden dash of spray hit him in the face as a gigantic lump of earth smashed down into the water in front of him.

The roof of the hole was caving in.

A vortex swept around him and tilted him sideways; the river howled and caught at him savagely, its stones turning under his feet; a branch from an old tree was dashed into his face. He heaved his body towards the bank and was knocked over. The diamonds began to fall from his hand.

With a grinding roar, a great semicircle of the bank collapsed into the river. He did not hear it, for he was ten yards downstream, hanging on to the bare twigs of a small tree which grew out from the side, an ill-rooted bush of a tree that whipped back and forth as he hauled himself along it. He was nine-tenths drowned and both his bleeding hands were empty. . . .

It was the twenty-third of April, three months to the day since Lobengula had died. Maria Prinsloo was playing the harmonium. She wore a pale green dress of organdy with short puffed sleeves, a lavish skirt, and a wide black velvet belt.

She was waiting; for Decker, of course, she had been expecting him for many weeks; but also for a cousin of Ernst's, Piet Stockenstroom of Johannesburg, who was coming to buy the house. She had put such a low price on it that he'd jumped at it.

Maria was intensely practical; she intended to rise in the world. She had the brains and she would have the husband. Matabeleland was a coming country. Gabe, whether he'd found his diamonds or not, was going to be a propertied man and a power in the state; she wouldn't nag him into it, but by the Lord Harry she'd push a bit.

She went to the kitchen to make herself a pot of tea. Deadhead roused, jumped off the red velvet sofa, and followed, hoping for a titbit. She was growing fat.

Someone rapped on the front door. She went to the window, carrying the tea-cosy, and glanced out. On the road, which was radiant with sunshine, stood a team of six little grey donkeys. They seemed familiar. She could not see who was on the stoep. Just as she was turning away, the off-leader extended his neck and snapped angrily at his mate. Something clicked in her memory. Crook!

She smoothed the lace at her neck and opened the door.

Before her stood an apparition. It was a stocky, robust man of a deep brown complexion; a splendid thick moustache covered his upper lip. He wore an iron-grey suit, conservatively cut, a pearly waistcoat, and a wondrously gaudy blue-and-crimson tie. In his hand he gripped a fashionable bowler hat with a curly brim.

She opened her lips and smiled, otherwise petrified by this incredible sight.

"I wish you wouldn't laugh," said the man plaintively. It was indeed Gabriel Decker.

"Darling!" she said, and fell into his arms. He half-carried her in and shut the door with his heel. They kissed each other heartily. Finally she pushed him away and said, trying not to giggle: "You look perfectly lovely."

She led him to the sofa. The red bitch came to sniff at his feet. Maria touched him uncertainly; she could not think where to begin asking him things. "Would you like a cup of tea?"

"Sure. I'll stable the jackasses while you get it. I just bought 'em back from Filson—the cuss made five pounds on the deal."

"Oh but wait!" she burst out. "I want to know——"

"I'm thirsty," he said, and walked out of the house, his dog after him. Maria flew to make the tea. All she could say to herself, over and over, was, *That's the man you were going to push a bit!* She had turned as weak as a new lamb at the sight of him.

When the tea was ready he had come back, shed his coat and boots, and was stretched on the sofa.

She poured him a cup of tea which he laced with brandy from the decanter. "Tell me," she said.

"Well, I went down to Pretoria from Bulawayo; ridin' the mail coach. I had some business there. That's where I got this outfit, so's to look respectable. Then I came here."

"You're impossible," she said happily.

"Let's see . . . honey, I'm not the capitalist we figured I'd be," he said, scratching Deadhead behind an ear. "That old buzzard Mjana busted the dam and just played hell with the loot. I had me quite a time there. Anyway, when I got to Bulawayo I ran into Peters. You recollect Peters?"

"Good God," she said, "of course I recollect Peters. He saved your life!"

"Yeah, so he thinks I'm the greatest man there is. That's how it works," said Decker philosophically. "Well, I took him along to one of those canvas bar-rooms and we talked half the night. And the upshot was—honey, I don't know how to tell you this." He looked embarrassed.

"Just *tell* it!"

"Well. I'd been thinkin' like sixty all the way from the fly belt, and made up my mind I got to make a living of some kind, you see, not being any swell independent like I'd hoped. And I thought, I know a lot about farming, and a lot more about ranching; and I could likely make quite a go of it, running cattle in Matabeleland. So what I did was, I got us a ranch."

She didn't say anything. He eyed her sidelong and cleared his throat and said: "You know what the Victoria Agreement was?"

"That every man in the war was to have three thousand morgen of land, twenty gold claims, and a share of the captured cattle."

"That's right. That's over six thousand acres. I wasn't entitled to it, since I was pretty much a stranger and nobody was sure what I'd done except to rescue Peters; but Ernst had it coming, since he worked for Rhodes. So I talked to Jameson and he laid out a nice piece of territory for you. I signed for it."

"Oh, that's splendid. That's an enormous amount of land."

"It's a handkerchief of a ranch," said Decker with a Westerner's scorn. "But here was Peters, with the same amount, not knowing what to do with it He's a born foreman, but no kind of a hand at top-bossing. So I looked at his spread, and bought it from him."

"We own two farms?" she exclaimed.

"No, just one. I hunted up the feller that had the range next to Peters's and traded yours for his. We own the whole valley, better'n twelve thousand acres. Gives us elbow room." He poured out a little brandy.

"The best part of it is," he said comfortably, "that Peters has signed on

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DECEIT—4

You can fool some of the people all the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.

Abraham Lincoln

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Earthshaker

continued from previous page

with us. He'll do the work. He likes to work. He's out of his head, but it's a blessing for me, 'cause I sure despise hard labour."

She went to kneel beside him and kiss him once more. "I couldn't be happier, dear."

"I'll build us a house," he said. "I'll make us a good ranch, Maria."

"I know you will."

"And then," he went on dreamily, "when it's runnin' right and Peters can take over the thinking end, as well as breakin' his back with gratitude, why, honey, I'll go into politics."

"Politics?" she repeated blankly.

DECKER looked at her seriously: "Sure. After a country's a few years old it's crawling with politicians. There are twenty thousand Matabele over there who won't have much of a show without friends in high places. Right?"

She put her hands behind his head and kissed him till she nearly bruised her lips. "Gabe, you're a noble soul."

He grinned sheepishly. "Boss Decker," he said, trying it for sound.

"I'll be so proud of you." Gazing at him affectionately, she pictured him in his grey suit and curly brimmed hat, several decorations on his chest, with Cecil Rhodes begging him to stand for Parliament. She broke down and howled. It was the funniest thing she had ever imagined.

"You wait, sis," he growled, stung by the laughter, "I'm not so dumb as you'd think to hear me. All it takes is money; and we got enough o' that."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, I didn't come outa that creek poverty-stricken!" He pulled something from his waistcoat. "Here's a paper says I have eighteen thousand pounds in the bank at Pretoria. I told you I had business there. Went to sell my diamonds, with a letter from Jameson vouchin' I didn't steal them."

"You——"

"Sure I got some. Damn near drowned when the bank fell in on me, but I crawled ashore with a mouthful."

"And you didn't tell me," she gasped. "You tantalized me, letting me think you were penniless."

"Wanted to see if you loved me for myself," he grinned; then, as she gave him a pained look, "I just forgot to mention it. I've got used to it, that's all past. I guess I'm sort of excited about what's coming. You see, when I've made a name for myself, maybe they'll hear about me as far away as the States. So I been telling myself: Get into politics, be a senator or whatever they have here, and after a spell write the U.S.A. Government and tell the truth about that massacre. Then I'll show you Arizona Territory."

"Yes," she said, trying to catch her breath, "oh, yes." All these plans, and all so like him in their curious mixture of generosity and self-indulgence, daydreams and materialism. "You can do it, Gabe."

He fished in a pocket of his fancy waistcoat. "Here," he said almost shyly, "I saved this one, it was the best. We'll put it in a ring for you."

She held the fabulous pebble on her palm, rolling it back and forth and looking at it breathlessly. It was pride, it was opulence; it was the crystallized resoluteness of Gabriel Decker. She closed her fingers tightly on it.

She tried to thank him, but all the words she thought of were impotent, they were what a girl would say in return for a gift of no more consequence than . . . than a cold, expensive jewel.

And then, suddenly, she smiled. She had thought of the only way to answer him, and to thank him. King Lobengula had once said the same thing to him, but now on her tongue it meant everything there was to be meant.

"Darling," she said, "you are my man."

THE END

© *Robert Krepps, 1958*

Four minutes to twelve

continued from page 11

intervals, Christine in her new red blazer and cream Panama—a small figure against the green privet hedge. She had about two hundred yards to walk to their home while Jack Price watched her, gauging just when to send the car stabbing forward and across the pavement. . . .

For a moment he wondered if Spode was bluffing. But with Christine's life at stake, even if it was a bluff, McCandless knew it was one that he dare not call.

Spode said: "Funny. You got me eight years on the Moor. Now you're getting me eight thousand nicker."

"Why did you hang about so long, for God's sake?" McCandless said. "We could have been at the bank five minutes ago."

"This way you don't have time to try anything, Mac."

"I won't try anything," McCandless said. Panic seized him. "But what if there's a queue? It's market day."

Spode's gold tooth glinted. "You'd better not have to queue, Mac, had you? You're big business."

McCandless slid the car to a halt in front of the bank. He was reaching for the bank bags when Spode stopped him. "Easy now," he said. He began taking off his jewellery: diamond rings, diamond tie-clip, an ornate identity bracelet. . . .

"Got to look poor," he said. "Poor but honest—like you, Mac." He opened the car door and got out on to the pavement. "Come out this side," he said. He waited watchfully while McCandless scrambled across the seat with the bags.

Together they crossed the pavement and went up the wide steps. The big swing doors stood open. Spode put his hand on McCandless's arm. He said: "No tricks. I'll be behind you all the time."

After the glare of the sunlight the room seemed dim and cool. Their heels clicked on marble tiles. Few people waited at the counter. McCandless was able to choose a grille where there were no customers. It was nearly ten to twelve by the big clock on the far wall.

"Good morning, Mr. McCandless." The cashier was small with a countryman's brown face. He smiled, trying to see over McCandless's shoulder, and met Goldie Spode's bright black eyes. His smile faded.

McCandless pushed his firm's cheque under the grille, the cheque bearing his father-in-law's signature. He had telephoned the bank earlier telling them the amount he would be drawing.

THE cashier picked up the cheque, turned it over in his hands, nodded, scratched his head, put the cheque down and banged it with a rubber stamp. "It's a fine day for the market, isn't it?" he said.

"Yes," McCandless said. He was looking at the clock. "I'm in a bit of a hurry. If you can——"

"Too nice a day to be rushing about," the cashier said. "You're sweating already, Mr. McCandless."

McCandless bent down to pick up the bags. Spode had a handkerchief to his face and was carefully blowing his nose. The cashier looked at Spode's silk shirt and fifty-guinea suit.

"I see you've a new man with you today," he said.

"Mr. Pallet's ill." McCandless was

"Don't plant it too near the fence. We don't want all the apples falling next door"

passing the empty bags over the grille.

The cashier looked interested. "Nothing serious, I hope?"

"No, nothing serious." McCandless looked at the clock. It was eight minutes to twelve.

"Oh, well, I'm glad to hear that," the cashier said. He sighed, lifted the leather bags, and moved away. McCandless was shaking with tension.

Spode touched the knuckles of his hands together. "What a dozey creep," he said. "Too bad if school comes out early."

"Shut up," McCandless said. He felt sick. He stood holding the mahogany counter, watching the big hand of the clock moving in little jerks.

HE thought: *Christine*. She had a friend, Betty, who lived in the next house and often walked home with her. They might both be killed. Because he had saved two children from drowning two other children might die. And poor Pallet was probably hurt—might, indeed, be dying for all he knew. . . . McCandless felt tainted. He had brought death to this peaceful West Country town.

Banks were like churches, he thought. Hushed, cool, slow. *Slow*. The big hand jerked again. It was nearly five to twelve. He wondered if he were going to faint. He leaned forward, clutching the grille, trying to see the cashier.

"Take it easy," Spode said behind him.

Take it easy. Spode had always been the cool one, the planner, the leader. He and Price had been followers. . . . Goldie and his two Locks. That was what they had been called twelve years ago.

He had been only a kid then. Orphaned. Never had a chance. Easy to fall under the influence of somebody like Goldie. . . . *No*, he thought, checking the surge of self-pity. *It wasn't that way*. He had enjoyed it. The excitement. Price putting the brick in, Goldie clearing the jeweller's window while he waited with the engine revving. The thrill, the easy money.

There had been several jobs like that. The thrill had died on the day Price battered down an old man who got in his path. McCandless had gone to the police that night.

The cashier came back to the grille. "Here we are. That didn't take long, did it?" he said. He started to lift the bags over and then stopped. He looked at McCandless doubtfully.

"Do you feel all right, sir?" he said.

"I'm all right," McCandless said. He reached for the bags. Reluctantly the cashier passed them across. McCandless, with Spode close by his side, left the bank almost at a run.

It was four minutes to twelve.

"From here to the school is four minutes for a smart driver," Spode said as they pulled away. "You used to be a smart driver, Mac."

McCandless did not reply. He was hunched over the wheel.

"You're getting lippy," Spode said, and chuckled. Now that he had the money he was relaxed. He patted the two bags on his knee and then, unhurriedly, began putting the rings back on his fingers. "They tell me you're an accountant these days," he said. "How come?"

"NIGHT school," McCandless said. Briefly he remembered the years of study after his eighteen months in prison. Hard work had been the price of his passage back to decent citizenship. Ellen, little Christine, the trust of his father-in-law—these were the bonus he had not deserved.

"Smart of you to leave the Smoke. Jack and me had almost given up looking for you," Spode said. "Thought you'd have changed that name, though. Not many McCandlesses about."

He had thought of changing his name, but it had not seemed worth while. He had a doomed feeling that whatever he called himself Spode would ferret him out.

"Maybe there'll be one or two less soon," Spode said. He gave one of his rare laughs. He was in a high humour.

McCandless blasted on the horn and swerved to avoid a cyclist shooting blindly from a side turning. The car rocked. "What's the time?" he said.

"Minute to twelve, Mac. I hope we make it."

"Do you?" McCandless said.

"Well, naturally," Spode spread his hands wide. "I don't want the nipper to die. It might stain my conscience."

"By God, if I could kill you I would!"

"If is a big word. But you know, Mac, I thought about you a lot when I was on the moor. I worked out a lot of fancy ways. . . ." Spode glanced sideways, his gold tooth showing. "Funny. The knife still seems best."

McCandless turned into the road that intersected with Queen's Parade. They were in the suburbs now and the speedometer needle flickered past sixty. Distantly, over the hum of the engine, he imagined he heard the school bell. Christine would be on her way out of class. But perhaps she would be late. . . . Pray God, she had not been early.

With part of his mind McCandless was thinking about Spode, about Spode's knife. He knew that the moment they reached Price's car, Spode would turn on him. Yet to save his daughter he had to go on.

He came up to Queen's Parade too fast for the corner. The tyres shrieked as he braked. The speedometer needle fell back to thirty and in the second that he swung the car into the corner McCandless saw his chance.

Spode had said he was a smart driver. In the old days it had been his one skill. He had a natural ability, a quickness of reflexes, that a racing driver might have envied. Now he had to draw up all that old skill, untapped during the years of family motoring.

SWINGING into the parade, McCandless accelerated sharply. With a straight, clear road ahead it was the natural thing to do. But as the tip of his right foot stabbed the throttle pedal to the floor, his heel slammed on the brake and the car came to a crash-stop.

McCandless was braced but Spode, unprepared, was thrown hard against the windscreen. The bank bags fell from his knee and he grabbed at them instinctively.

Before the car had quite stopped, McCandless let go of the wheel and swung a bunched right fist at Spode's face. The blow sent Spode's head back against the door pillar. He clawed at his knife pocket. McCandless hit him twice more with all his strength. Spode sagged and fell forward, blood pouring from his face.

The whole thing took perhaps three seconds.

McCandless started the car again. Ahead he could see the school, could see small, red-blazered figures in the playground. Rounding a gentle curve he saw the green sports car parked near the school gates a hundred yards away. He knew what he had to do.

He was thirty yards from the other car when its exhaust puffed blue smoke and it began to move away.

The Triumph was gathering speed but still in a low gear. McCandless aimed his bonnet just behind the smaller car's front offside wheel. He hit it at fifty. In the last moment before the collision he saw Price's terrified face staring at him. . . .

A distant voice said: "This one's copped it, poor devil." Somebody answered: "The chap in the sports car will need scraping up. What a mess!"

McCandless fought to drag his eyes open. He was lying on the verge between the road and the pavement. Under one of the almond trees, he thought. He tried to sit up but he couldn't. He turned his head. Two ambulance men were drawing a blanket over something on the grass. Briefly, under the blanket, he saw an arm, a hand with two diamond rings.

The men came across the grass towards McCandless and picked him up. He hadn't realized he was already on a stretcher. His legs were tied at the hip and ankle, roughly splinted. The man at McCandless's head saw that he was conscious.

"Don't worry, chum," he said. "You'll be all right."

McCandless smiled faintly to show that he had heard. As they carried him towards the ambulance he saw policemen moving about the wreckage in the road. He closed his eyes for a moment. They must have drugged him because he wanted to go to sleep. But before they took him away he had to tell them about Pallet.

"Listen carefully," he told the ambulance men, weakly but clearly. "This is important. . . ."

THE END

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Readers seeking advice from our team of experts are invited to send their problems to the "John Bull and Everybody's Weekly" Free Advice Service, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Letters will be answered by post, and problems of general interest will also be published on this page

We advise . . .

THE lease on my house says that all my boundary fences are party fences, but I have followed the custom of most of my neighbours in looking after only one of them—that on the left-hand side. Now a high wind has damaged the right-hand fence. Must I help to repair it?—W. S., Eltham, London.

● If the fence is a party one, each owner is liable to pay half the cost of repair. Keeping the other fence in good order does not exempt you.

THE RED MENACE

WHEN I went to collect a fairly new pair of shoes which I had asked a mender to heel, I was told that someone had spilled a bottle of red dye over them. Although I realize that accidents do happen, I am loath to let the matter rest as the shoes were only a few weeks old. The ticket says: "For conditions see notice in shop." — Mrs. J. R., Rowley Park, Stafford.

● If the notice in the shop was placed in a position where you could have read it easily, and the notice contains a condition to the effect that the firm will not be responsible for any damage caused by their negligence, you will be unable to claim compensation.

If there is no such condition, you are entitled to the second-hand value of the shoes at the time you took them to be repaired.

RUNGS GONE WRONG

IF a room is let in a parish hall, and the people who take the room use a large ladder on the premises to put up decorations, who is responsible for any accidents with the ladder?—E. E., Backwell, Somerset.

● If the ladder is used without the owner's consent the user takes the risk.

If it is with the owner's consent, the owner would be liable only if an accident was due to his negligence; for instance, if he failed to point out a defect in the ladder.

For a safeguard, put a prominent notice on the ladder stating that anyone who uses it does so at his own risk.

SECOND-HAND SURFACE

I HAVE been given an old marble clock which has lost its surface polish. How can I restore it?—Mrs. C. S., Appleby, Westmorland.

● Rub some black shoe polish into the marble. Before it is dry rub two or three times with a clean duster.

TEST IN REVERSE

BECAUSE of the difficulty involved in giving normal hand signals, is an examiner allowed to test a learner in a car fitted with left-hand drive?—E. A. H., Stockwell Road, London, S.W.9.

● The Ministry of Transport says there is nothing to stop a person from taking a test in a left-hand drive car, especially if he or she intends to use that car after passing the test.

Bearing in mind that the driver might use a normal car afterwards, the examiner may ask for a demonstration of hand signals while the test car is stationary.

RADIO FORM

HAVING built a portable transistor radio set, my son, on returning to his boarding school in Wales, took it with him. Does he require a licence for it, or does the one we have at home cover him? He has only borrowed the set for wet evenings.—J. G. H., Potters Bar, Middlesex.

● One licence covers any number of radio sets in a single household, but lodgers, paying guests and occupiers of flats count as separate householders and require separate licences.

Your son will need a licence. Other radios for which individual licences are required are for those in motor cars and hired or rented sets.

CONSTANT HOT AND DAMP?

WHEN making inquiries into paraffin heaters I was told that they had one disadvantage—that for every gallon of fuel burned they gave off a pint of water and tended to make the house damp. Is this true? — J. L., Tewkesbury, Gloucester.

● Paraffin convector and radiant type heaters give off about a pint of water for every gallon of fuel.

However, as long as the room they are being used in is well ventilated, you should not suffer from any condensation or an unduly damp atmosphere.

WATER SHED

I RENTED a shed for my motor-cycle at 5s. a week, but after using it for a few days decided to give it up because it let rain in and the door would not lock properly. I paid the money until I found another shed, but now the owner has got a solicitor to ask me for 25s. as I had not informed him that I was leaving. There was no written agreement—must I pay the 25s.?—J. L., Blackburn, Lancs.

● The fact that you had no written agreement regarding the tenancy of the shed does not relieve you of your obligation to give a week's notice to end the tenancy. If you did not do this you can be held liable for the rent.

Worth Noting

ROGER SMITHELLS

keeps practical homelovers up to date

● **Roll out the ladder:** This ladder, which may be rolled up to store tidily in a loft or cupboard or even in the boot of a car, may be unrolled in less than half a minute to form a strong, safe ladder, 10 feet long. With steel-backed side members and oak rungs, this ladder is light enough to be handled by a woman. There is also an easy-roll ladder/step ladder, 12 feet long, which hinges in the middle and rolls up, making it adaptable for household use. A detachable platform for putting buckets on is also supplied. Price of the 10-ft. ladder is £7 13s. 4d. and of the ladder/step ladder £9 11s. 8d., carriage paid in each instance. Made by Bentall Alley, Ltd., Maldon, Essex.

● **Soap tip:** To make a lamp shade simpler to unscrew in the future, smear a small quantity of soap round the inner thread of the round bakelite holder, when fitting a new or another lamp shade. You will find that it will unscrew very easily next time. (Mrs. Rogers, Shrewsbury.)

● **Spray window cleaning:** Clean windows, mirrors, windscreens, TV screens and other similar surfaces the simple way with a Spraydex window cleaner with an economy atomizer inserted in it. Finger-tip pressure on the plunger will produce a fine mist spray, which need only be wiped off with a clean cloth. The complete Spraydex window cleaning kit costs 3s. 5d. complete and of course the economy atomizer can be transferred to a new bottle when required. An 8 oz. bottle costs 1s. 6d. By Copydex Manufacturing Co., Ltd., 1 Torquay Street, Harrow Road, London, W.2.

● **White step-cleaner:** After steps have been cleaned in the usual way, damp the sponge head of one of the modern sponge-topped white shoe cleaners. Squeeze a little cleaner on to the edge of the step, draw it along with the sponge and the result is a clear, white edging for your step, with the minimum of hard work. (Mrs. M. Archer, York.)

● **Cleaner collars:** Sew a row of buttons along an old shirt collar and peg it to the wash-line. Newly washed collars can now be buttoned on to this. Saves new collars getting out of shape or becoming soiled. (Mrs. D. M. Warwick, Huddersfield.)

● **Stop that bang:** Noisy doors can be silenced by glueing small cubes of foam rubber on to the jamb of the door. The correct spot is easily seen, as there is usually a mark on the paint where the door hits it. One piece is usually sufficient and is easily fixed in position with clear Bostik. (W. Senior, Leicester.)

* * *

If you have a trouble-saving household tip for this column, send it in to Roger Smithells, JOHN BULL and EVERYBODY'S WEEKLY, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. One guinea will be paid for each tip published.

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LATEST WINNERS

Bullets No. 2,188 Result:

£600 plus Swiss and Riviera Holiday, or £700 lump sum: E. Lewis, 1 St. Brigid Road, Heath, Cardiff;

Little Old Britain—*Losing* That "Furrowed" Look!

£50 Mrs. R. Payne, 16 Gladsmuir Road, London, N.19: **Judging By The Missiles — Dare *Anyone* "Cast Stone"?**

£25 F. W. Dadson, 51 Elphinstone Avenue, Hastings: **A Flying Start—Realizing *Neither* Had "Wings"!**

£10 Mrs. A. Lamb, 47 Burnthwaite Road, Knotty Ash, Liverpool: **Little Old Britain—Base—"Yankees v. Giants"?**

£9 R. W. Plested, 122 Elms Road, Harrow Weald: **The Berlin Time-bomb—*Bloc* Buster—Or *Bluster*?**

£8 P. J. Pinfield, 35 Mancroft Road, Tettenhall: **They Call Him Lucky, But—*Foresight, Fortitude* Forged Fortune!**

£7 Mrs. A. B. Walker, 58 Derrydown Road, Perry Barr, Birmingham: **Shrinking—Woman's Precious "Garment"—Modesty.**

£6 B. I. George, 52 Henley Crescent, Solihull: **More Than Russia Can Stand—Jim's Trombone—Monty's "Trumpet"?**

£5 Mrs. L. D. Wood, 10 High Street, Newport Pagnell: **More Than Economics Can Stand—Workers Who Won't *Understand*!**

£4 R. Bishop, 16 Maythorne Close, Watford: **Bags Of Money—"Saved," When Weekly *Cheques*.**

For ten winners of £3 see *Bullets Bulletin*. 2,100 other Awards have also been posted.

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WAY TO WIN

Here's how to shape a Bullet. First, grasp the broad idea by enjoying the latest winners. Then choose as your starting-point any Example from list below. To it, add TWO, THREE or FOUR words to make the whole into a bright Bullet.

Gardener Macmillan	Far Better
Plan For Tomorrow	Put Some Pep In It
To Attract The Visitors	Official Blindness
The New Shangri-la	Paying Through The Nose
Hasn't Lived	At The Police-station
Tide Of Nationalism	Going Swimmingly
The Sun Peeped Out And	The Camera Can't Lie, But
Horse-sense	A Scandal
We Wonder Where	Bowler, Brolly, Brief-case
Root Of The Trouble	What Is A Gentleman?

Last six Examples are incomplete: if you wish to use one, first complete it with a word of your choice—then make your Bullet as above.

His Holiday	Plagued With .....
Running Down The.....	Wonderful .....
Next To.....	It's No Use To....., So

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STICK 3d. STAMP here for four pages of practical help to success in May 30 *Bulletin* (For four issues send P.O. 1s.)

RULES 1. First Prize for best Bullet received; others in order of merit. The test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.
2. Editor undertakes that all Bullets received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.
3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover Bullets in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed at 1s. per Bullet. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.
4 Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated June 20), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, June 6, for early news of No. 2,193 result.)

POST ENTRY
Bullets 2,193, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.99

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